

T H E
EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS,

O R
MEMOIRS OF FLORICOURT.

FROM THE FRENCH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR THE PROPRIETOR;
AND SOLD BY T. VERNOR, BOOKSELLER, BIRCHIN-
LANE, CORNHILL.

1788.



BOOK the FIRST.

I have been acquainted with misfortune from my earliest youth: my heart has been agitated by the passions, and their fatal effects have diffused bitterness through the course of my existence. Time, without having dissipated my

B

sorrows,

2 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

sorrows, has diminished their force, and I am no longer a prey to despair. A calm melancholy now takes possession of my heart, and composes its former inquietudes. The unhappy take a pleasure in looking back at the end of a painful career, transport themselves in idea to past scenes, and recall what they have suffered. The harrassed mind seems to repose itself on its former troubles, and still enjoys that gloomy satisfaction, that indefinable yet true pleasure, which it alone seems capable of, and which is perhaps above all the vain consolations of Friendship.

Engrossed by my misfortunes, within the solitude in which I live, I wish to encrease them still more: they form a part of my existence; as Philosophy supports me against the cruel remembrance

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 3

brance of evils which afflict me no longer, and which now only serve to meliorate my heart. It is in order to gratify my own feelings, that I write the History of my Life. I now hold the flambeau of reflection over the misfortunes by which it is mark'd, and like a shipwreck'd mariner, talk of the perils I have escaped.

My Family originated in one of the Southern Provinces, where it long held a distinguished rank. My Grandfather, after having followed the profession of arms, and after having been covered by the wounds of honour, enjoyed the several employments his valour merited : but having by his liberality deranged his fortune, he at his death left M. de Floricourt a great name, with very little property to support it. We are

B 2

not

4 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

not to look for friendship among the great: M. de Floricourt found not a single friend amidst the number of those who seemed most attached to his father.

Born in the bosom of abundance, and unable to forego the luxury in which he had formerly lived, he became disgusted with the service, and retired to one of his estates, the small revenue of which would have ill sufficed any other than himself. Here he soon felt the necessity of having a companion to participate with him the weight of an idle life to which he had not been accustomed.

Mademoiselle de Merville lived in the neighbourhood: Her family was eminent in the law; her brother filling
a con-

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 5

a considerable place in the parliament of ———, where his intelligence and equity rendered him respected and beloved. It was on this Lady that M. de Floricourt cast the eyes of affection, and every thing concurred to render the alliance desirable. Love conducted these two lovers to the altar, and presided at their union, of which I was the only fruit. Tears of joy bedewed my cradle; my mother suckled me herself, and I was idolized by my parents, whom I had scarce learned to distinguish and look on with affection, when my misfortunes commenced by a dreadful catastrophe. My infancy precluded my feeling all its horrors at the time; but the recital since made me by persons of veracity then present, have engraven it on my memory in indelible characters. I ought previously to have related an

6 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

adventure in which my father had been engaged, and which proved the efficient cause of this subsequent misfortune.

M. de Floricourt had pass'd his life like other military men of his age; young and frivolous, he had fallen into all the irregularities incident to officers in country quarters, and had sought to dissipate by love and galantry that time which hung heavy on his hands. Madame de B——— who resided in the Town of ———, possessed the united advantages of beauty, rank, and fortune; and superadded to these, was eminent for wisdom and virtue, she was attached to her duty without vanity or disgust, was adored by her husband, and loved him with equal affection. M. de Floricourt saw and conceived
a strong

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 7

a strong passion for this lady, which though treated by her with contempt and scorn, raged with unabated violence.

A relation of M. de B—— who lived under the same roof, was in a like predicament with regard to my father; and (seeing the violent passion he felt for her sister) sought to gratify her own, she therefore pretended to pity him, in order to enter into his confidence; and promised to exert herself in subduing the disdain of her he loved. After having tried by every possible method to alienate his affections from M. de B—— by representing in the most lively colours her indifference and even aversion to him, and finding all she could say had no other effect than that of inflaming his passion, she altered her conduct, acquainting him

B 4

by

8 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

by degrees, that her sister began to be softened ; but that she trembled for her reputation, and feared a discovery, for which reason she recommended the utmost secrecy and circumspection on his part, charged him to restrain his tongue, command his looks, and submit to be guided by her ; in which case she promised to answer for his success. In consequence of this advice, M. de Floricourt having redoubled his respect, and becoming perfectly silent on the subject of love, was in reality better received by the object of it. Love is credulous, and the artful confidant knew how to rock Floricourt in the cradle of false hopes ; she in fine concluded her scheme, by writing him a letter, to which she signed her sister's name, and in which she made him the tenderest professions of love, as a recompence

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 9

pence for the obedience he had manifested, and then concluded by promising greater rewards of his discretion.

A few days after (M. de B_____ being absent) M. de Floricourt received a second letter appointing a rendezvous, to which he flew with the impatience of youth, and the rage of a first passion. He was secretly introduced into a private and darkened apartment, where his abandoned confidant yielded to his embraces under the respectable name of a sister whom she so cruelly injured.

Illusion often creates the highest imaginary happiness, and M. de Floricourt fancied his complete. He quitted the apartment with the utmost precaution, enchanted with his success; and

10 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

scrupled not (thro' the vanity of youth and the levity of his age) to boast of his conquest, when heated by wine, at his next meeting with his military companions, love and gallantry being the usual topics of their discourse.

A secret of this nature in such hands was consequently soon divulg'd; those who had not succeeded with M. de B— wish'd to humble this proud beauty; and M. de Floricourt, who thought himself authoriz'd (by what had pass'd) to take liberties, became more free and familiar with the lady, who not understanding his hints, or the tenor of his discourse, forbad him the house. Incensed at this treatment, he complain'd of it loudly, which coming to the ears of M. de B— a challenge ensued, and this affair ended as is usual among military

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 11

tary men, by the death of one of the parties, which prov'd to be that of M. de B——

No words can descibe the feelings of his wife on this occasion; wounded to the quick, by the loss of her reputation, and that of an husband she ador'd, she vow'd the bitterest revenge. M. de Floricourt hush'd up the affair by the force of interest and credit, and being soon inform'd of the fallacy of the adventure, made publick reparation for it. But this did not satisfy M. de B—— the image of her dead husband pierced with wounds, was ever present to her imagination, tho' she confin'd to her bosom that fire of indignation and revenge which was one day to burst forth. Having in vain appeal'd to the laws (with all the energy of affliction,) she

12 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

she form'd an unheard of scheme: Having at that time a son in the cradle, she determin'd to make him the avenger of his father; she neglected nothing in his education that could forward her views; she familiarized him early with the sword and pistol, and allowed him no other masters than such as could instruct him in the use of arms. The hatred and fury with which she was possessed making her forget she was a mother, and that she might lose her own son; never once considering that the young de B——— living in society, must stand in need of more essential qualities and accomplishments than that of being a fencer, or that she was perhaps educating a monster: her whole attention being to strengthen his constitution in order the sooner to satisfy her revenge, she
formed

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 13

formed his soul to violence, inspired him with the most ferocious sentiments, and accustomed him to blood. At fourteen, the young de B—— appeared developed: nature, tardy in others, seemed to have seconded the impatience of a woman who had ceased to be a mother in order to remember she had been a wife: she now therefore hastened to acquaint de B—— with the untimely death of his father, and of the hopes she had conceived of him.

The young savage, educated and tutored as he had been, readily embraced her scheme, and went to my father's retreat; where asking to see him, he immediately explained the cause of his visit. M. de Floricourt, who had almost forgotten the adventure,

14 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

ture, astonished at such an address, and from so young a man, paused a moment to reflect on me, who was of the same age with M. de B——— when he had deprived him of his father: this did not however prevent his accepting the challenge: they fought, and M. de Floricourt was brought back, dying, to his castle,

Let us picture to ourselves the situation of my mother at this spectacle! I happened to be with her at the time, whom she instantly quitted with a scream, darting a look of anguish and despair at the body of her bleeding husband without shedding a tear; and being plunged into consternation and silence, she embraced him with a distracted air, and fell senseless at his side.

The

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 15

The domestics hastened to her assistance. She came to herself with cries of anguish, and observing the surgeons busy about the body of M. de Floricourt, she approached them with anxiety, sought to discover in their looks the situation of their minds, and only perceiving fatal signs, she again directed her eyes towards her husband in order to read in his palid features how long he had to live—bent over his body—received his last sigh—and expired.

Oh Philosophy! thou hast carried thy flambeau into the midst of our darkness, and hast inspired us with horror at the rage of fanaticism; but thou hast not yet torn from our hearts that blind fury which leads us to the destruction of each other! laws are indeed
made

16 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

made to punish this sort of combat; but the seal of contempt is set on the man that refuses a challenge.

I was too young to feel the losses I had sustained; but an intimate friend of M. de Floricourt's, and his companion at all ages, informed me (long after) of this melancholy event, the bare recital of which makes me tremble at this day. O! my father! could neither the image of your wife or son counterbalance that barbarous prejudice in favour of duelling to which you fell a sacrifice? No! for such is the infatuation of the military, that an affront with them is only washed away in blood. This friend of my father's, M. de Vilson, no sooner saw my mother expire, than he caught me to his bosom, bedew'd me with his tears, deplored

deplored my fate, and assured me of every regard and attention that the son of the friend of his heart exacted from him. He ordered me to be conveyed to his castle, which was not far off, and immediately sent an express to ——— in order to inform the President de Merville, my mother's brother, of what had happened.

M. de Merville instantly came post, to weep over the remains of his beloved sister, and those of his brother in law, to which he paid due honours. Some days elapsed in the execution of justice, proper people were sent in pursuit of the murderer, who had fled from vengeance, and many more in the arrangement of my father's affairs, which were in a state of the utmost confusion, his mode of life being ill suited to his small income: the
numberless

18 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

numberless creditors who immediately surrounded his mansion, soon swallowed up the small remains of his fortune—and poverty was now my only inheritance.

The President, who had tenderly loved his sister, could not see me without emotion. He was a man in years—had himself been unhappy—and was a Widower left with one son, who was for some time the object of his fondest affection, and with whom he had long lived in the strictest bonds of amity and friendship; dividing his time between the duties of his station and the education of his son. But at an age when the passions ought to have been mute, he became inflamed by the fires of love, and his principles not suffering him to pursue any other mode of gratifying them

them than that of marriage, he fell a sacrifice to the ambition and artifice of his wife.

Madame de Merville soon gained a perfect ascendant over her aged husband, and induced him to neglect his son, for whom she conceived the utmost hatred, banished him from genteel company by severity and ill usage, and compelled him to take shelter from her cruelty in the society of the profligate, where the principles of probity and virtue, instilled into him by the President, were soon effaced by those of immorality and vice. Of this change in the conduct of his son, Madame de Merville took the earliest opportunity of informing her husband, who consequently treated him with the utmost rigor, and induced him to fly from the place

20 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

place of his nativity, which he daily cursed. After five years of absence, they were informed of his death; and that so well authenticated, as to leave no trace of doubt in the mind of his father, who had now only to regret having given birth to so base a son.

Madame de Merville, delighted at this event, and the more so as she became herself pregnant, and flattered herself that the infant to whom she hoped to give birth would one day become heir to the President's wealth; but in this she was mistaken: Providence, as if to punish her injustice, suffered her not to live to enjoy the fruits of it; she expired in childbirth of a still-born infant, confessing the turpitude of her conduct towards her son in law.

This

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 21

This afflicted father beheld me with the utmost emotion, as I recalled to his mind the image of his son whose place he destined me to fill. He took me in his arms, wept over me with anguish, and vowed to the shade of his departed sister that he would prove a parent to me. The good M. de Vilson, rejoiced at having been instrumental to my happiness, applauded himself for his conduct, and saw me depart without a sigh.

My Uncle himself took charge of my education. The recollection of my misfortunes induced him to bring me up to his own profession, as he trembled (on my account) at the barbarous prejudices of the military. In proportion as I advanced towards manhood, I began to feel the generosity of his conduct

22 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

duct, and his kind indulgence towards me, while he in his turn loved me with the utmost tenderness.

My infancy afforded nothing very interesting. I was brought up with the son of M. de Vilson, whom the President chose to have near him, and with whom I contracted a friendship which time has only served to augment. At the death of his father he took up his residence in the Town I inhabited, and where we became inseparable. I was taught to think early, to set a just value on things, and as I had no other preceptor than my generous patron, my soul was formed according to his model. He gave me a perfect knowledge of the laws, conducted me through its labyrinths, elucidated its perplexities, and qualified me to succeed him in his office.

He

He in the mean time purchased me a Counsellor's place, and guided me in the fatigues which it incurred ; by which means I obtained a degree of consideration and respect very ill suited to my years.

Totally engrossed by my function, I performed its duties with alacrity ; and looked on my uncle as a father. Sacred name ! which I never hear without emotion, and which I never could pronounce to the real author of my being ! My days were now passed in tranquillity and peace : the time however approached when I was to enter into the gloom of misfortune, and into the career of those passions which I fancied myself able to resist. I looked on M. de Merville with the most affectionate regard ; and concluded that
he

24 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

he only was worthy of my esteem. But I was soon to be convinced of the extent of my sensibility; and (though naturally calm) of the violence, ardour, and impetuosity of those passions which new objects were to inspire.

All the tribunals of justice being shut during the long vacation in autumn, I passed it at an estate of my uncle's near the sea, where the delightful prospect, and the air I breathed inspired me with a new existence. Charmed with the solitude of the place, I wished to be collected, and possessed the means of being so; as the castles of the neighbouring gentry were at a great distance, and prevented their visiting each other often. The nearest to my uncle's was that of M. d'Erlet, who was distantly related to him, though
they

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 25

they did not associate; but as the enmity which subsisted between these two families had a powerful influence on my life, I shall here relate its cause.

M. d'Erlet, though born in obscure life, possessed great talents for business, acquired great riches, and married a cousin of my mother's, though interest alone formed their union. Mademoiselle de Merville, destined by the mediocrity of her fortune to the sequestration of a convent (in spite of her strong attachment to the world) had long delayed the purposed sacrifice; her heart being in the possession of a man of quality as little favored by fortune as herself: but as their union was opposed by both their families, M. d'Erlet thought himself authorized

C

to

26 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

to make propofals, which where readily accepted by her parents (on account of his immense wealth) who compelled her to give him her hand.

She was no fooner his wife, than torn by conflicting paffions, ſhe conceived an averſion for him which the humiliation of ſuch a marriage daily increaſed. As ſhe had been brought up with high notions of vanity and pride, ſhe diſdained to ſubmit to her fate with patience, and never beheld M. d'Erlet but with a degree of horror. She ſometime after diſcovered herſelf to be pregnant; which far from reconciling her to her huſband (as is often the caſe) only ſerved to augment her rage againſt him; as the inconveniences ſhe ſuffered by a weak and delicate conſtitution exaſperated her ſtill more, though

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 27

though the careffes, attentions, and tender affiduities of M. d'Erlet ought to have inspired her with far other sentiments.

Her labor was difficult and distressing, and the violent pains she suffered redoubled her impatience and disgust, as she shuddered at being thus made a sacrifice. Is it possible! exclaimed she, in an agony, that a d'Erlet can give such exquisite pangs to a Merville? these indiscreet words being heard by her husband, he in his turn became disgusted at the ill treatment he received in return for his kind affiduities, and seeing himself humbled into the dust by the woman he adored, he instantly quitted her apartment, and never entered it more, or enquired either after his wife or the fruits of her labor.

28 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

Madam d'Erlet being delivered of a daughter, died a month after of a miliary fever, without her husband's having once enquired after her.

The mind of M. d'Erlet having been deranged, and his disposition soured by the ungrateful conduct of his wife, could now no longer bear any thing which recalled to him her idea: in consequence of which he made his innocent daughter suffer the effects of his spleen and ill humour, while he conceived an implacable hatred for all her mother's relations, whom he never saw afterwards but through common civility; and though eighteen years had now elapsed since the death of Madam d'Erlet, her husband, firm and constant in cruelty, had never once changed his ferocity of character.

Though

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 29

Though I now led a sequestered life, and the hatred of M. d'Erlet inspired me with no enmity against him, I thought it by no means necessary to seek the society of a man who I knew detested me in his heart. I therefore devoted myself to my uncle, to study, walking, and the chase.

I lived a serene and pleasant life, forming no further scheme of happiness than that of having my friend Vilson with me to enjoy the sweets of solitude; but this was impossible; as nothing could withdraw him from the town, where he confined himself to his house, shunned society, saw none but me, and passed for a misanthropist. For this mode of proceeding I often blamed him, and wondered at the singularity of his taste; but as I was

30 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

convinced of the goodness of his understanding and the integrity of his heart, I always subscribed to his opinions, though I remained ignorant of the motives of his conduct; as I am not one of those who are addicted to jealousy in my friendship, or apt to suspect without a cause.

One day when the pleasure of surveying the surrounding country, and admiring the delightful objects it presented to my view, of verdant meadows, flowing fields, and variously cultivated lands, induced me to exceed my usual limits, I wandered to a great distance from the castle, and found myself on the borders of a wood, the winding paths of which, covered with green turf, invited me to pursue its tracts, and indulge those solitary reveries in
which

which I took so much delight; but I had no sooner entered its labyrinths than cries of distress struck my ears, accompanied by the voices of several men in contention. Astonished at what I heard, I flew to the place whence it proceeded, and discovered a young peasant struggling with three men, who were endeavouring to wrest his gun from him. On a nearer approach I perceived them to be the game-keepers of my uncle, who had surprized the young man in the act of killing an hare, which they had taken from him, and now acquainted me that he was a peasant of M. d'Erlet's.

The youth no sooner saw me than he yielded up his gun, and fell at my feet intreating mercy. Pardon me, Sir, said he, I have disobeyed your com-

32 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

mands and am guilty; but I have a father now languishing on a bed of sickness, and a mother drooping by his side for want of sustenance; I have endeavoured to procure them food by that gun which I had borrowed, and have killed the hare these men have taken from me; my father must now die, for our benefactress is absent! as I was strongly affected by this simple and pathetic tale, I blamed the gamekeepers for acting with so much severity, and ordered them to restore the young man's hare and gun. I then interrogated him with regard to the condition of his father, and received for answer that he had been tenant to M. d'Erlet, but being disabled by age and infirmities, had been turned out of his farm, and compelled to take shelter in a cottage, where he was
near

near perishing with cold and hunger: that himself being informed (when at the Convent of the Nuns of St. — where he was gardener) of his father's melancholy situation, he prevailed on another to take his place, and immediately flew to his assistance.

Amazed at the excellent principles and exalted character of this young peasant, I followed him to the habitation of his father; reflecting, as I went, on the bounties of nature, who had bestowed qualities and sentiments on the poor which might ennoble the rich and great.

On my arrival at the cottage, I beheld a scene of the utmost poverty and distress. The old man was expiring on a flock bed, while his wife sat weeping by his side. The young peasant

C 5

immediately

34 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

immediately ran to his mother,—presented her with the hare,—declared she should live,—and bid her return thanks to M. de Floricourt. As I now gave them money to purchase food, a bed, and other necessaries, I observed the mind of the old man strongly affected, who bursting into tears, attempted to raise himself in order to express his thanks, while his wife and son, falling at my feet, embraced my knees with transport. How celestial is the joy of making others happy! How comfortable the thought of having done our duty!

These good people could not for some time restrain their tears, or properly express their gratitude, as they had long laboured under the displeasure of their landlord; and his daughter, who

who was their benefactress, was absent, and was not expected for some days. Her assistance was certain, said the old woman; and yet but for your bounty it would now be in vain! You cannot think, Sir, added she, how good Julia my daughter (for so I call her) is to us. But you don't know her:—She is rich, and yet delights in doing good. All the country feels the effects of her presence,—for when she is here, she wipes away the tears caused by her father's cruelty.

I listened with pleasure to these natural effusions of the heart, and told the old man and his wife that I would assume the place of Julia, and endeavour to put them in a way of life which should exempt them from all future fears of poverty. I will
convince

36 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

convince you (added I) that all men are not like M. d'Erlet.—Make yourselves easy.—I will return to you again.

I quitted them with emotion ; strongly impressed by the scene I had just been witness to, and dwelt with delight on the compassionate generosity of Julia. Some days elapsed without my hearing any further from these distressed cottagers ; but my valet at length informed me one evening that my benefactions had been torn from them by the levy of the poll tax, and that they were now as wretched as ever. In consequence of this information I went to them the next day,——for born in the bosom of adversity, could I do less than pity and relieve the distressed?——But what was my astonishment,

tonishment, when on entering the cottage I beheld a beautiful young creature administering relief to the old man, laying his bed in order, and preparing him a mess of broth with her own hands. It was Julia herself! I approached her with awe; but she addressed me with familiarity,—“Don’t be surpris’d, Sir, said she; generous hearts are in unison: I am only finishing what you had begun.

Charmed with the figure and extraordinary conduct of this incomparable woman, I attempted to assist her, and intreated her to permit me to second her assiduities: but she made me no answer; and giving me the basin which contained the broth without the least discomposure, ran to raise the old man, took it from me again, and

38 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

and presented it to the languid peasant. The elegant simplicity with which she did all this excited my admiration:—Behold (said I mentally) the triumph of humanity?—Ye rich! ye luxurious! ye vain and great! follow the example of Julia! nor think it beneath you to succour the indigent, compassionate the afflicted, and relieve the distressed!

As I had been totally unacquainted with scenes of this nature, I was lost in astonishment, and could scarce become sufficiently collected to answer Julia with propriety when she thanked me for my attention to this unfortunate family. I have been absent some time, added she, and but for your assistance these poor creatures would have perished! I scarce knew what to
answer:

answer: I was wrapt in extacy! I felt an indefinable pleasure! and Julia seemed to have inspired my soul with an exaltation of sentiment to which it had hitherto been a stranger. I knew she was my supèrior in virtue, and looked on her with a degree of adoration at which she seemed greatly surprisèd.

After every thing had been administered for the relief of these poor peasants, we quitted their cottage together, animadverting on their unhappy situation, and on what we had done for them. Every word that issued from the lips of Julia surprisèd me; and her generosity transported me. I proposèd speaking to my uncle in their favour, and urging him to receive them into his house. She seemèd delighted with my scheme, entreated me to put it
into

40 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

into execution, and I immediately quitted her in order to keep my word.

As I returned home, a croud of confused ideas rushed into my imagination which I could by no means unravel. I arrived at the castle without being able to conceive what I had been thinking of, and was amazed at being there so soon, as the distance between that and the place where I had left Julia seemed to have been annihilated. I wandered about the park in a profound reverie, without knowing its cause, and my mind and heart were filled with something I was ignorant of. I wished to be alone—Solitude delighted me—and I continued walking till mere lassitude and fatigue compelled me to re-enter the castle.

As

As it was late, my uncle, who grew uneasy at my long absence, would not retire to rest, but sat reading in his study. The moment I entered, he told me with a smile that he had been very unhappy about me. Surprized at what he said, I immediately looked at my watch, and to my astonishment found it past twelve o'clock. Hurt beyond measure at having given M. de Merville a moment's pain, I apologized for my inattention, and pleaded the pleasantness of the walk, and the fineness of the evening, as an excuse for my having stayed out so late. I then related all that had happened, and so far excited his compassion towards Julia's nurse and her husband, that he bid me give orders to have them taken under his roof, and added
he

42 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

he would appoint the old woman his housekeeper.

I retired to my chamber, delighted at the success of my application, and penetrated with the utmost gratitude towards this excellent man. I went to bed, but never clos'd my eyes throughout the night, though it seemed to me of no unusual length: a soft languor took possession of my senses, and communicated itself to my mind. Julia presented herself to my imagination without giving me pain, and I admired her generosity and personal graces with the calmness of a Stoic; all the faculties of my soul seeming benumbed and useless. This state, which I still remember with pleasure, and am fond of recalling, was one of the happiest periods of my life. I laid
with

with my eyes open till the morning appeared, and paid not the least attention to the manner in which I had passed the night.

I arose, and attempted to read; but got into the middle of the volume without being able to form an idea of what I had been reading. I placed the book on a reading desk, fixt my eyes on the first page without understanding it, and was kept in a sort of immoveable enchantment. When my valet entered, I paid not the least attention to him. He dressed me in silence, and I quitted the castle.

After having wandered about for some hours, I mechanically went towards the habitation of the old peasant,—which I entered without intending it, neither hoping or desiring to see Julia there,

44 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

there, though I was greatly chagrined at not doing so; and the languor which possessed my soul, and suspended its motions, now becoming restless and unquiet, I sighed without knowing why.

The old peasant, his wife, and son, surrounded me on my entrance, calling me their benefactor, and joining my name with Julia's. I trembled,—cast my eyes around—and then fixed them on the place where I had seen Julia the evening before; whom not finding, my heart contracted, and a tear escaped me. I now joined with this grateful family in their praises of her for near two hours, never suffering any other subject to intrude; and then told the old man and his wife that they might come to my uncle's castle, where they would

would meet with a kind reception, and where they might live in peace. I also told their son that he was now at liberty to return to his old place, as gardener to the convent of _____ and that I should be happy to see him on my return to the town in which it was situated; assuring him at the same time of my attachment, and my inclination to serve him in all emergencies.

These happy peasants, now falling at my feet, wanted words to express their gratitude, and could only manifest it by their tears. I endeavoured to raise them from their humble posture; but the old man, transported with joy, desired to continue kneeling till he had returned God thanks. No words can describe his subsequent simple yet pathetic

46 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

thetic prayer, which was followed by one for Julia and myself. This being ended, they all with one voice joined in our mutual praises; calling us the charming couple, and exclaiming with rapture that Floricourt and Julia would prove a blessing to the poor! I was so strongly affected by these last words, that my soul seemed detached from my body, and I involuntarily fell on my knees, fetched a deep sigh, rose immediately after, and quitted the cottage, reflecting on the energy of their prayers.

This delectable morning appeared very short to me; and the languor I had felt on entering the cottage was now changed into tumultuous thoughts. Julia, with her exalted sentiments and extraordinary beauty, together with confused

fused wishes, taking possession of my heart. Yet I felt nothing in this chaotic state but a conviction that something was wanting to my happiness whenever I reflected on Julia.

I returned to my uncle's in great disorder,—wished dinner over a thousand times,—and at the end of it escaped into the solitude I sought for. I now gave orders that the old peasant and his family should be sent for, and then pursued my accustomed walks.

Buried in thought, and inattentive to the road I had taken, I walked a great while, and at length found myself near the castle of M. d'Erlet. I had never seen it before, and never intended to do so; but it now came
into

48 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

into my head that I ought to pay M. d'Erlet a visit as a matter of form. I therefore went up to the castle, was announced, and not finding him at home, was introduced to his daughter, who received me with blushes.

I was so confused at seeing her that I totally forgot the many things I had to say, only declaring in broken accents (as she seemed surprized at my visit) that I came to pay homage to her virtue, in spite of the coolness which reigned between our families; hoping she by no means participated that enmity, which would render me the most wretched of men. As this idea now for the first time struck me forcibly, I became doubly embarrassed, and remained silent, never once recollecting how necessary it was to inform

Julia

Julia of my having provided for her nurse. But as I was now in the presence of her who was the grand object of my attention, I forgot every other idea. She however recalled me to the subject, and renewed her thanks. Every thing Julia said penetrated my very soul, and I gloried in her approbation.

My visit was of an unusual length, and M. d'Erlet returned, to my sorrow, as I was alone with Julia, and wished to continue so. I made an apology for not having paid my respects to him before, and he answered me with politeness; I then added, that not having found him at home, I had taken the liberty of waiting on his daughter. To this last part of my speech he answered very coldly, and

Vol. I

D

after

50 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

after a conversation very reserved on his part, and very open on mine, I took my leave, turning my eyes towards Julia, and meeting her's. A ray of light now darted into my soul, and I began to know myself.

When I quitted the castle of M. d'Erlet, I felt myself strongly agitated, my heart seeming ready to burst from my bosom: but this tumult subsiding by degrees, I began to reflect on my acquaintance with Julia; and where I had first seen her; recollecting with pleasure her condescension towards me. As hope now came to my assistance, and poured her balm into my wounds, all my troubles vanished; especially when I recalled the prayers which gratitude had extorted from the old peasant and his family. New fires now
inflamed

inflamed me; and my imagination becoming bewildered by the idea of possessing Julia, I fancied she was already united to me by indissoluble bonds, that she loved me with an ardour equal to my own, and that we were completely happy.

On my return to my uncle's castle I was awaked out of this dream of fancied felicity by his porter's informing me that M. de Merville desired to speak with me. I instantly flew to his apartment with the unbounded affection his conduct merited, and thought myself happy in obeying his commands. He soon discovered by the traces on my countenance what had passed in my mind, and having before observed my gloomy and thoughtful aspect, he now desired to be in-

D 2

formed

52 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

formed of my situation. Though I was convinced he was my benefactor, friend, and father, I was so confused and embarrassed that I knew not how to answer him; a secret though incomprehensible fear restraining my utterance.

Floricourt, said he, I know the human heart. Your's is strongly affected—and it is in vain that you endeavour to conceal your situation from me. Open therefore your heart to your friend! your father! banish all inquietudes,—treat me as you would de Vilson—and let age make no disparity between us! I have been young myself, and I know how to pity others! A sigh now escaped me, and a crimson blush overspreading my countenance, I turned away my head.

'This

This excellent man now came towards me with open arms, reiterating his intreaties. Speak to me, my dear Floricourt! said he, and dissipate my uneasiness! I could no longer resist:—A sudden trembling seized me—and I fell at his feet. Read all the secrets of my soul, my generous patron, (exclaimed I) continue to love me still—and love the charming Julia! O my uncle! my father! my friend! did you but know—I could say no more; but M. de Melville, who fully comprehended what I had to say, added Julia! Yes, sir; rejoined I with transport, if you did but know Julia! I am the child of your instruction—You have taught me to follow your example, to love virtue, to prize humanity, and I have found them both

54 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

in Julia! I admire—I adore her! and cannot live without her! Ah! my dear nephew! (said my uncle with emotion) your heart is deeply wounded, and you are preparing fresh daggers for it!

Terrified at these words, I exclaimed in an agony, that happiness could never be incompatible with the possession of Julia. Blind and infatuated young man! interrupted M. de Merville, stop one moment, and inform me whether Julia is acquainted with your passion, and whether she returns it? I cannot answer your question, my dear Sir, replied I; for I have never been able to reveal my passion to her.—I only know my own feelings—my admiration of her,—and can scarce aspire to such exalted excellence.

You

You may then still save yourself from destruction, cried my uncle;—you may still subdue your passion. Trust to my experience, and let us reason together.

You love with ardour, are ignorant whether Julia returns your love, and yet would take the first opportunity of revealing it. Should she prove insensible, what torments would be laid up in store for you! The virtuous Julia, if she be such as you describe her, cannot, after an avowal of your flame, let you remain in a state of suspense: she will open her heart, and perhaps refuse your's. You may be compelled to fly her—fly her now—for you cannot be one of those senseless men who would persevere in a hopeless passion, and persecute the

D 4

object

56 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

object they adore.—Violence is ever unsuccessful, and perseverance does not always prevail. If your souls be not in unison, it is in vain that you look for happiness. Let us even suppose you in possession of Julia in spite of all obstacles; esteem and reason will not always supply the place of love: of this you are by no means convinced at present, but experience would soon teach you that passion cannot be satisfied without a reciprocal flame. You would accuse your wife of coldness in spite of her attachment, would judge of her feelings by the ardour of your own, and upbraid her with the want of affection. Wounded by these reproaches, she would endeavour to please you; love you greatly, and strive to love you more. This would prove a painful situation, would at length

length disgust her, and the more so because she felt herself innocent of the charge. Fatigued by this painful conflict, your misfortunes would be reciprocal, and you would prove mutually unhappy.

I had need of all the respect I felt for M. de Merville to hear him without interruption, as the picture he had drawn provoked me. I have nothing of this sort to fear with Julia, exclaimed I, when he had finished. Sweet, tender, and compassionate as she is, she cannot be insensible to love! Do you really love her? said my uncle. Yes, certainly, replied I; how can you ask the question? Then tremble at constituting her infelicity, said M. de Merville, raising his voice; if your souls be

56 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

object they adore.—Violence is ever unsuccessful, and perseverance does not always prevail. If your souls be not in unison, it is in vain that you look for happiness. Let us even suppose you in possession of Julia in spite of all obstacles; esteem and reason will not always supply the place of love: of this you are by no means convinced at present, but experience would soon teach you that passion cannot be satisfied without a reciprocal flame. You would accuse your wife of coldness in spite of her attachment, would judge of her feelings by the ardour of your own, and upbraid her with the want of affection. Wounded by these reproaches, she would endeavour to please you; love you greatly, and strive to love you more. This would prove a painful situation, would at length

length disgust her, and the more so because she felt herself innocent of the charge. Fatigued by this painful conflict, your misfortunes would be reciprocal, and you would prove mutually unhappy.

I had need of all the respect I felt for M. de Merville to hear him without interruption, as the picture he had drawn provoked me. I have nothing of this sort to fear with Julia, exclaimed I, when he had finished. Sweet, tender, and compassionate as she is, she cannot be insensible to love! Do you really love her? said my uncle. Yes, certainly, replied I; how can you ask the question? Then tremble at constituting her infelicity, said M. de Merville, raising his voice; if your souls be

58 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

really allied to each other, and if her passion be equal to your own, your misery will be doubled; Julia will never consent to become your wife without the approbation of her father; and you know his disposition; a man inflamed by the ill conduct of his wife, absolute in his will, insatiable in his revenge, and delighting in the misfortunes of others. His hatred to our family reaches even unto you, and discloses itself in his behaviour to his daughter. He will take a pleasure in tormenting you, thwart your every wish, disappoint all your schemes, see every thing in the wrong light, and Julia will be unhappy.

These words were like daggers to my heart, and I groaned aloud. Would you, Floricourt, (continued M. de Merville,

Merville, without paying the least attention to what I did) consent to make the woman you love miserable? The love you feel, and wish to inspire her with, if indulged would not be easily eradicated; her tears would flow incessantly, and despair would shorten her life; you would have reason to shudder at her sufferings as well as your own, and to regret your lost tranquility and that of the unfortunate Julia: Before you give way to this passion, anticipate the future; reflect on what would be your feelings in case what I have supposed should be realized; conceive the horror of having made her you love wretched, and of having made her misery irremediable. Let me conjure you by every sacred tie to pluck this fatal arrow from your bosom; or at least suffer alone,

60 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

alone, and do not endeavour to draw another into perdition, especially her you love. What would you think of a man who in a state of imminent danger ran to seek out his best friend, in order to expose him to almost certain death? you would call him a wretch! a monster! and yet you are yourself attempting the same thing. O my son! you, who should be the consolation of my age,—the staff of my infirmities, do not I beseech you plunge a dagger into my heart by depriving me of the hope of seeing you happy! I conjure you by your deceased parents, by my afflicted heart, and even by that Julia whose happiness ought to be dearer to you than your own, to conquer this fatal passion.

The

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 61

The continuation of my uncle's speech almost annihilated me. I remained immovable in a chair, and appeared without sensibility, except by the tears which flowed in torrents from my eyes, and the sighs and groans which escaped from my bosom. I felt the full force of his reasoning, and the distressing truths he uttered, but had never observed them before, my heart and soul being totally ingrossed by Julia, and admitting no other object.

M. de Merville now advanced towards me with the most tender solicitude, but I turned my eyes far from him, and considered myself hurt and wounded by his reflections. He had dissipated the cloud in which I had been enveloped, had torn the veil from
my

62 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

my eyes, and had destroyed my fancied felicity. I therefore regarded him as my bitterest enemy, and thought I ought to hate him. But reflection came at length to my aid, and convinced me I was wrong. I knew the purity of his intentions, the extent of his benevolence, and his unbounded affection for me. How could I then attempt to hate him!—hate my benefactor!

After having for some time floated in this contrariety of passion and irresolution of sentiment, I came to myself: I know my duty, exclaimed I, but know not how to act! Oh my uncle!—my guardian!—teach me how to subdue my passion!—teach me how to vanquish myself! You know not how deeply I am wounded—you know
not

not the tortures of my heart! Support of my age, and consolation of my days! replied M. de Merville, your wound may bleed for some time, but you may make a glorious effort! you may fly from Julia! O heavens! cried I, in an agony, without being able to utter a syllable more. An elevated soul, continued my uncle, is capable of all things, and rises superior to every obstacle, when honour, duty, and virtue require it. Will you endeavour to obey me; will you shun Julia for some days; time may do the rest.

I closed with this dreadful proposal, —promised to obey him,—and resolved to keep my promise, though my heart was rent to pieces at the time. I knew the extent of my obligations to
M. de

64 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

M. de Merville;—I knew I owed every thing to his patronage and protection, and fancied that by my obedience to him I should render myself the more worthy of Julia.

This last idea greatly composed me, and I supped with some degree of tranquillity, relying on my firmness. The conversation of M. de Merville served to strengthen me in my resolution: He recalled to my mind every historical fact, every instance of magnanimity, and my soul seemed to rise in proportion to the examples of fortitude he adduced. I at length retired, tho not to rest; endeavouring to keep up to the full tone of my resolution; but that seemed exhausted by my conversation with my uncle.

I passed

I passed the night in a sort of afflicting calm, which holds a middle place between sleep and wakefulness, seems a state of annihilation, and bears the image of death. Day roused me from my lethargy, and I arose to divert myself. I wandered about, not knowing where I went, till I passed by the castle of M. d'Erlet, when I heaved a deep sigh,—exclaiming fatal hatred!—and finding my resolution forsake me, took towards a neighbouring wood, from whence I could discern the place which contained the incomparable Julia. My tears flowed in a torrent, and I totally forgot my resolution. I advanced some steps towards the castle, resolved to enter it once more; but the promise I had made my uncle, together with all that had preceded it, now recurring forcibly

66 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

bly to my mind, I stopped :—Julia ! cried I in an agony, you know not the sacrifice I make you,—and you shall never know it!

I returned home with reluctant steps, and passed eight days in this situation. I eat but little—sighed continually—and greatly afflicted my uncle. I dared not stir out in the day, and never rambled about, as my uncle always followed me, observed my dejected air, profound cogitations, and secret conflicts, without saying a word, tho^o he was deeply interested in my concerns, and greatly pitied my situation. I would sometimes throw myself at his feet, and beg pardon for my imbecility of conduct, when he always raised, embraced, and pitied me; exhorting

horting me to persevere in my resolution.

In the evening I escaped from the castle, went directly to M. d'Erlets, and passed the night under the walls which surrounded the apartment of Julia; entering the gardens, and roving along the dark walks of the park, which were rendered doubly gloomy by the shades of night. Julia walks here sometimes! cried I mentally, but now enjoys a sweet repose unknown to me! I then penetrated into the groves, visited every part, and exclaimed—this is her customary walk! this is a place she often resorts to!

In one of these evening perambulations I found a work bag. I knew it to be Julia's, as I had seen her wear

68 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

..wear it, and concluded it had been left there by accident. I took it up, kissed it with ardour, and watered it with my tears,—examined its contents, and delighted in its possession because it belonged to Julia——follies very excusable at my age and in my situation. The dawn of day put an end to my reveries, and I quitted the place, taking the work-bag with me.

As I returned home I re-examined its contents, and found a letter addressed to the unfortunate —— promising them comfort, consolation, and relief, the next morning. As Julia alone could have written this letter, I pressed it to my lips, repeating her name a thousand times, and resolving to follow her example, or rather to precede her in her acts of beneficence, by relieving those

those distressed and unfortunate beings she had promised to succour. Julia will be made acquainted with my conduct, said I mentally; she will honour me with her esteem; but alas! shall I never inspire her with warmer sentiments than those of esteem and friendship! shall I never obtain her love!

As the sun was now up, I ran towards the objects of Julia's bounty; but being detained by my eagerness to hear her praise, I stayed till Julia herself appeared. I had promised to avoid her.—I had promised to shun the object of my love—but it was now impossible. In vain did I recall my resolution—my vows—my promises:—an irresistible impulse held me, and riveted me to the place. Julia
perceived

perceived my embarrassment and blushed. I had asked her permission to wait upon her, had obtained it, and had not seen her for fifteen days! She observed some change in my countenance, feared for my health, and enquired after it with a solicitude which redoubled my embarrassment. I took one of her hands with transport, and applied it to my lips by an involuntary motion; but reflection now coming to my aid, I let it go,—sighed—wept—and retired to some distance.

Julia, with a grace peculiar to herself, now thanked me for anticipating her intention of relieving the distressed; adding she hoped she should not be taxed with indiscretion if she desired me to accompany her a little farther. Tho' I trembled from head to foot,
I followed

I followed her steps, not being able to resist her powerful influence over me.

As we were now alone in the open fields, Julia, who was very uneasy at my change of countenance, asked me the cause of it? I could not resist the question, and replied it was her father's hatred; adding, that I hoped she was not of his mind. Julia now dropped a tear, saying her heart was not made for hatred, but that she felt its effects, and was the victim of it. Does your father then hate you? exclaimed I, with transport;—is there a man on earth that can resist your tears! O did you but know my heart!—yet no! I ought to be silent! ought only to admire you! But why——oh why cannot I subdue your father's hatred to my family!

72 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

mily!—why cannot I obtain his pity!
I would sacrifice my life!—but alas!
I am born to be unhappy!

You born to be unhappy! cried
Julia, with a look that penetrated my
very soul; you cannot be in earnest!
My heart is ready to burst! exclaimed
I;—but do not, do not interrogate
me!—for tho' I feel torments inex-
pressible, I will keep the fatal secret!
my misfortunes shall be confined to
my own bosom—they shall not be
participated—I renounce all hopes of
happiness—and will not even allow
myself to think that things might
have been otherwise.

Julia now joining in my sighs and
tears, encreased my anguish. You pity
me then, said I;—this is my only
happiness,

happiness—the only pleasure I am permitted to taste—the only one I have reason to hope for! Her anguish now seemed to equal mine.—I saw her grow faint—I saw her ready to sink under the excess of her sensibility—and ran towards her in order to prevent her falling. Heavens! what a situation! Julia in my arms—her head reclined on my breast—her eyes wet with tears—and her bosom heaving with violent emotions! I trembled—shuddered—and a burning fire seemed to dart through my veins. I pressed her in my arms in spite of my resolution, and cried O heavens! behold what I am to lose! O barbarous relations! must you ever be at enmity! great God! thou canst not will my death or my misfortunes! thou canst not cause my misery! my

74 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

happiness consists in the affection of Julia ! of Julia whom I adore ! My love ! cried I to Julia, my heart has betrayed me, my secret is discovered, and I am undone ! Julia now trembled, raised her head from my bosom, and disengaged herself from my arms. I threw myself at her feet, and said every thing that the most lively passion could inspire. I saw her eyes bathed in tears, her cheeks covered with vermillion, and her whole countenance expressive of satisfaction, softness and love. My predicted misfortunes now fled like shadows before the sun, and I rejoiced in my felicity, insensible to every idea except that of loving and being beloved.

Julia, enfeebled by the excess of her emotions, looked at me with affection :

fection: Rise, said she, and think of your situation and mine; be assured I love and honour virtue; preserve therefore to me this precious gift, and remember I am at the disposal of my father, hard and obdurate as he is. Could you soften his heart, could you remove his dislike—yet I dare not hope for it—but of this be assured, that your happiness will constitute mine;—this is all I can say—And all I wish, interrupted I with precipitation. My uncle! my benefactor, will labor to make me happy; will obtain M. d'Erlet's consent, as I am sure of that of his daughter. You blush, my Julia! noble proof of an exalted soul, which prejudice has not been able to extirpate. You are yourself in all things, and I hope I shall not prove unworthy of you.

76 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

Our hearts were now disclosed to each other, and I learned the full extent of my felicity. Julia discovered a thousand mental treasures I had till now been a stranger to, and her candour, simplicity, and unaffected virtue, divested of pride, rendered her still more the object of my adoration. We cannot command our inclinations, said she; destined to be united, our souls discover their counterpart, and fly to meet each other; vain are the obstacles laid in their way; Floricourt cannot deceive me!—he cannot be so base!—his sentiments convince me of his truth!

After a warm, tender, and animated conversation with my beloved Julia, I retired, enraptured by the idea of enjoying without remorse the affections of her I loved. Let those who can
recall

recall the effects of a first passion, its strong intoxication, wild extravagancies, and chimerical notions, judge of my situation! I was now delivered of the burthen that had oppressed me—I was convinced of Julia's love—I therefore trod in air, and every surrounding object became beautiful in my eyes. I congratulated myself on what I had done—and bid defiance to misfortune! The obduracy of M. d'Erlet no longer terrified me; for could he resist my importunities; could he fail to avow the joy of having given birth to such a daughter! And should my efforts prove in vain, were not the affections of Julia ensured to me. Was not her heart in my possession? What could I fear?—what could I wish for more?

78 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

I returned to my uncle's castle replete with flattering ideas; though I could not see M. de Merville again without recollecting the promise I had made him, and without blushing at what I had done. He received me with his accustomed kindness, embraced me tenderly, and told me he had seen Julia. She merits your esteem and admiration, added he, and is worthy of your strongest attachment. Placing myself in your situation, I feel what it would cost me to triumph over a passion raised by such an object! But your victory is the greater. It is doubly meritorious and doubly necessary. What would be your sensations, and what would be your turpitude, had you endeavoured to rob her of her happy indifference?—nevertheless I will speak to her father, tho' I have
little

little cause to expect any change in him: in the mean time I charge you to renew your efforts, and to endeavour to subdue yourself.

O my uncle! exclaimed I, it is now too late! You are ignorant of my offence, and of what has just passed: Julia!—I did not seek her, I met her by accident—I could not avoid speaking to her—I could not quit her—she is acquainted with my passion, and I with her's—My happiness is complete! O heavens! cried my uncle, what have you done? ah Floricourt!—

What man could have done otherwise? replied I with precipitation. When Julia interrogated me, weeping, and wished to comfort me, what

80 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

savage could have been silent in such a situation?—what brutal heart could have been proof against her tenderness? Consumed by my passion, and sinking under the burthen that oppressed me, how could I resist the importunities of the woman I adored? My secret is divulged——Julia loves me——and I am the happiest of men!

M. de Merville, who sighed deeply during my relation, never once interrupted me, and remained silent for some time. Let us drop the subject, said he at last; complaints are now useless; the misfortune I apprehended and endeavoured to prevent, is come to pass. I will however strive to repair it: I will myself visit M. d'Erlet, will exert all my faculties to move him,

him, and will leave nothing undone to make you happy. Floricourt, added he, you are my adopted son! I am far advanced in life, and cannot hope for many years; I approach the end of my career, and shall finish it with joy if you are happy: tho' M. d'Erlet is rich, property shall be no obstacle to the proposed union, since all I possess is from this moment your's.

Saying these words he quitted me, and left me plung'd into mournful reflections by a part of what he had said; but these reflections soon yielded to the joyful hopes he had given me at the conclusion of his speech. My whole soul was now engaged by the ideas of being united to Julia; my passion grew to excess, and my uncle became more dear to me than ever.

82 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

What he had done, and what he intended to do for me, transported me with joy, and I foresaw nothing but felicity! for the beloved, honoured, and revered M. de Merville had never yet pleaded in vain; and I was ideally sure of being happy.

I now flew to Julia, with an intention of interesting her father in my favour by my respect and attention, and to prepare him for the overtures which were to be made him; but Julia, whom I perceived in the garden, soon induced me to forget the motive which brought me to the castle. I approached her with precipitation, told her all that had passed, and acquainted her with my sanguine hopes of being happy. She took part in my satisfaction, and assured me she
greatly

greatly respected M. de Merville, of whom she had heard the highest encomiums; adding he had no need of being related to me in order to gain her esteem, as she was already convinced of his extraordinary merit.

Every thing now wore a different face with us,—a face of joy and gladness! We walked together a great while, and even in those very places where I had passed so many wretched nights. I pointed out to her the spot where I had found her work-bag, and described my extravagancies on the occasion. She seated herself in the very place, and I sat down by her side, hearing the most transporting assurances of her love. Cease! Julia! said I at last,—cease to promise me such unbounded felicity! left
my

84 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

my faculties prove unequal to the joy they inspire! I now stopt,—regarded her with the most critical attention, and observed her every motion; being plunged into a sort of delirium, the sensations inseparable from love were mute in me, I saw nothing beyond Julia; seeing—loving—and admiring her, satisfied my every wish,—and I scarce recollected that so sublime a soul inhabited a beauteous body!

I was roused out of this inebriety of mind by a noise which suddenly struck mine ear, and announced the approach of M. d'Erlet. Julia and I quitted each other with the utmost reluctance, our hearts being united by the strongest ties, and animated by the hopes of possessing each other. I rose with precipitation, though unwillingly,

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 85

willingly, kissed Julia's hand with ardour, and ran towards M. d'Erlet, assuring him of my joy at meeting with him, and telling him I came on purpose to wait upon him, adding I had been easily prevailed on by his daughter to wait his return.

He answered me with a coldness which encreased in proportion to the professions of regard I made him, and I retired greatly dissatisfied with my visit, and deeply wounded at his behaviour and the little attention he seemed to pay to my advances. A degree of fear now chilled my blood, and made me tremble; but when I recollected the influence of M. de Mer-ville, and his promised exertions, my cheek resumed its colour, and I flew to the castle to be informed of what
he

he had resolved. M. de Merville now told me he had already made application by a third hand to M. d'Erlet, and had proposed a rich and unexceptionable alliance for his daughter, without mentioning the family name; adding that though the friend he employed had conducted himself with the utmost circumspection, he could obtain no other answer from M. d'Erlet but that his daughter was yet too young,—that he had long formed other schemes,—and that he could by no means think of marrying her so soon.

As this ill success greatly distressed me, my uncle undertook to speak to M. d'Erlet himself, and promised to exert his utmost influence to serve me, though without giving me any hope, or conceiving any himself; but as I
knew

knew the powers of M. de Merville, and the force and fire of his arguments, I indulged the most sanguine expectations, not being able to conceive that any mortal could resist his eloquence. Yet though I now banished all fear, I could not divest myself of impatience, and therefore urged my uncle to put his scheme into immediate execution, which he promised to do the next day.

'Tis impossible to conceive the length of the preceeding night to my heated imagination. I passed it in forming the most powerful arguments to subdue the hatred of M. d'Erlet, and longed to communicate them to my uncle. I arose at break of day, and waited with the utmost impatience for M. de Merville's departure. I looked

88 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

at my watch a thousand times, and thought every minute an hour. The happy moment at length arrived, and I accompanied my uncle to the precincts of M. d'Erlet's castle, urging him by repeated solicitations to rend his consent from him. I then returned home, and waited with longing expectation for the result of this interview, which proved to be as follows.

M. d'Erlet was greatly surprized at my uncle's visit, and discovered some degree of embarrassment. This was however soon dissipated by the air of frankness and cordiality which the latter assumed. They now walked into the garden, and M. de Merville opened the conversation by declaring his uneasiness at the enmity which had long subsisted between them, as he was a
friend

friend to peace and harmony among relations; that he reflected with the utmost regret on the misfortune which had caused the separation between their families, and that being very desirous of renewing their amity he had taken this opportunity of making the first advances; he then added, that he candidly confessed his family had been guilty of errors with regard to M. d'Erlet, which he earnestly entreated him to forget.

I hate nobody! cried M. d'Erlet with emotion; tho' I have been grossly abused, and deeply injured: but the author of these insults is now no more—let us drop the subject.—I confess myself obliged to you for your visit, and cannot but commend the motives of it.

As

As my uncle now flattered himself that M. d'Erlet began to soften, he entered more deeply into the subject, and urg'd every motive that could induce M. d'Erlet to wish for their reunion. He then enquired after Julia, and mentioned me; declaring his intention of making me his heir. I have no nearer relation, added he, and my heart gives him the preference. Julia is your daughter, and Floricourt can make her happy.

Is this then the motive of your visit? exclaimed M. d'Erlet. Yes, replied my uncle instantly, I love and highly esteem this young man, and am sure you would do the same did you but know his merit. I!—who!—what! interrupted M. d'Erlet in a rage;—I give my daughter to the relation
of

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 91

of my bitterest enemy! That enemy is now no more, cried my uncle, and your resentment should be buried in her grave. You have yourself confessed, that the object ceasing, resentment should also cease:—Why punish the faults of one individual by extending your hatred to the many who are innocent? Floricourt esteems, respects and honours you as the father of her he adores: his happiness depends upon you, and Julia's upon him. Let us be reconciled. I conjure you! we may yet see this union with joy, and partake their felicity. Oh! M. d'Erlet! have compassion on my grey hairs, and spare me the anguish of seeing Floricourt unhappy! I proffer you my everlasting friendship, and ask no portion with Julia for my adopted son. Dispose pecuniary matters as you please,

please, and let them depend on her future conduct and that of her husband:—my fortune is considerable, and that fortune I insure to Floricourt.

To this noble and disinterested speech M. d'Erlet made no reply, appearing lost in thought; which induced M. de Merville to reiterate all his arguments in order to obtain his consent; and conjured him, with tears in his eyes, to grant his request, and make an old man happy!

You astonish me! cried M. d'Erlet, after a long pause. Give me time for reflection;—give me time to consider of your proposal—Send your nephew to me to-morrow, and I will give him my answer.

My

My uncle now quitted him, and was surprized to meet me in his return home. I saluted him with an embarrassed air, and asked him a thousand questions, dreading yet longing for his answers. He related every circumstance of this conversation without either inspiring me with hope, or plunging me into despair, saying my fate entirely depended on the disposition in which I should find his neighbour the next day.

I made my uncle repeat M. d'Erlet's answers over and over again, and could discover nothing (after a thousand investigations) that could either afflict or terrify me. He had not positively refused,—he had only asked for time to consider: nothing more natural, circumstanced as we were :

94 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

were: he had hesitated—he would have consented on the spot—he was melted into tenderness—his obduracy was gone—and I had nothing further to wish for. Thus did the flatterer Hope seduce me, and prevent my seeing that all my schemes of happiness were chimerical. I thanked M. de Merville with the utmost warmth, and endeavoured to testify the excess of my gratitude for all his goodness to me, while he in his turn participated my felicity, rejoiced in my satisfaction, and partook my tears of joy.

'Tis impossible to describe the ardour of my impatience for the return of morning: suffice it therefore to say I passed the night like the preceding one, but with less inquietude, as I
fancied

fancied myself sure of success, and that Julia was already in my arms. I rejoiced at the break of day, rose with precipitation, and was preparing for my departure, when I was stopped by my uncle. 'Tis yet too soon, cried he; do not expose yourself to the resentment of M. d'Erlet by breaking his repose, lest your views should be disappointed. I heard him with impatience—threw myself into a chair—rose in a minute—traversed the room—seated myself again—looked at my watch—and departed before the destined hour.

I walked with hasty steps towards the castle of M. d'Erlet, and on my arrival there found he was engaged: he however came to me in a few minutes, and desired I would stay
with

with Julia 'till his business was finished. My transports on this occasion are not to be conceived: I swam in delight—was convinced M. d'Erlet was thoroughly softened and that he was ready to give his consent. I flew to Julia, whom I already looked on as my wife, and found her quite composed and tranquil: this greatly surprized me, as I had no doubt of her father's having informed her of his determination in my favor, and of what had passed the preceding evening: but in this I was mistaken, M. d'Erlet not having said a syllable to his daughter of what had passed between him and my uncle: I now however acquainted her with it, but could with difficulty quiet her fears with regard to her father's silence on the subject. I however at last succeeded, by telling her that M. d'Erlet's

d'Erlet's motive could be no other than that of agreeably surprizing us by his unexpected consent.

We now yielded to the most sanguine hopes, and to all the transports with which love inspires truly captivated hearts when they see the impediments to their felicity removed. Julia, animated by my example, thought herself sure of that happiness which we enjoyed by anticipation. We threw ourselves on our knees, returning thanks to heaven, and praying for the welfare of M. de Merville, who had so powerfully exerted himself to obtain our felicity, and for M. d'Erlet, who had consented to our union. M. d'Erlet, who now entered the room, observed our position, heard our supplications, and advanced towards us:

Vol. I.

F

we

98 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

we approached him, still on our knees, with tears of joy and acknowledgement, endeavouring to kiss his hands as a testimony of our gratitude.

Rise! said he, with a voice that petrified us with fear;—what is it you thank me for? and what is it you rejoice in? Fools that you are, I only wished to be convinced of your connection!—I can scarce believe my eyes or ears!—Julia! is this your duty?—is this your sanctity?—to have disposed of your heart without my consent, and to have made known your foolish love without my approbation? As for you, base Floricourt! remnant of a family that will be always odious to me! by what illicit methods have you endeavoured to enter into my alliance? by artifice and seduction

duction you have basely contrived to gain the affections of a simple girl, and prevailed on her to forget she has a father!—a father who detests you—and who knows no other passion than that of hatred!

Oh! Sir! exclaimed I in an agony, (being plunged from the height of felicity into an abyss of woe, while Julia wept at my side, and the barbarian turned from us with an air of contempt) can you be ignorant of the power of love? your dreadful reproaches plunge a dagger into my heart!—you flattered my uncle with the pleasing expectation! I have promised nothing! said he with fury;—and this power of love exists not but in your own imagination! I am the father of Julia, and ought to have

F 2

been

been consulted before her.—You should first have obtained my consent. But be gone from this place, for she shall never be your's! Julia! added he, you will with difficulty obtain my pardon, and obliterate the impressions of your ill conduct. You have lost my confidence!—I charge you to have no further connection with Floricourt!—you shall never be his wife—you are my daughter, and I will be obeyed—and the most dreadful vengeance shall pursue you if you dare to disobey my commands! As for you, Sir! said he, turning to me, do not attempt to see Julia again!—I shall have a strict eye on your conduct, and whether she approves it or not she will herself be the victim. I have prepared another husband for her!—quit my house!—and beware of
of

of coming hither again, if you value either Julia or her tranquillity!

Saying these words he quitted the room, dragging Julia with him. Barbarian! I was going to say, but my tongue refused its office, and I fell senseless on the floor; in which state I was by his orders carried out of his house, and placed in the road which led to my uncle's castle. I soon came to myself; and transported with blind fury, returned to the place from whence I came, in order to load the merciless d'Erlet with reproaches, and plunge a dagger in his cruel heart. But the doors were shut, and I knocked without gaining admittance. In vain did I supplicate,—in vain did I sue for an entrance into this inaccessible house, for all seemed deaf to me.

Time however cooled my rage, and made me tremble at what I had intended. I now represented to myself the tiger d'Erlet as on the point of executing his menaces, and preparing tortures for his unfortunate daughter, and returned to the road which led to my uncle's castle with rage and despair in my heart.

I walked with a wild distracted pace, and neither saw or heard any thing. My uncle came to meet me; and my affectionate friend Vilson, who was just arrived, and impatient to see me, accompanied him. As I had no perception of them, Vilson called me by my name, and ran towards me. I could not however recollect him, or my uncle who now embraced me. I looked at them in turn with a vague
inattention,

inattention, and seemed for a while totally lost to reflection. I however at last distinguished them, and saw my uncle (who was terrified at my condition) turn his eyes upon me with astonishment. He dared not interrogate me, as my countenance declared the situation of my heart; though he longed to be informed of what had passed.

He now sought for proper terms to express his impatience for an éclaircissement, and finding none, took me by the hand with emotion, saying, well? I am the most miserable of men! cried I—a man without hope!—Julia is destined to another!—and death alone—saying these words I fell senseless at his feet, and was carried to my apartment, where by proper assistance,

sistance, care, and assiduity, I came to myself.

I now beheld my uncle and Vilson plunged into the deepest distress, and shedding tears of anguish. All is now over! cried I to my uncle;—Hope is extinct—and your predictions are verified! They endeavoured to raise my spirits by promising new methods—new efforts to serve me; conjuring me to live for Julia. This name acted like a charm, and brought me from the gates of death. I recovered from a state of weakness and delirium in about three days, and the first use I made of my ability was to return to the castle of M. d'Erlet, where I learnt, to my great disappointment, that he had quitted the place immediately after our last interview,

view, and had taken his daughter with him.

Torn by disappointment, I returned to my uncle, prevailed on him to follow M. d'Erlet,—and the vacation being almost ended, we set out together, accompanied by my friend Vilson. As my mind was totally engrossed by Julia, I talked of nothing else all the way we went, and enquired after her in every place we came to.

Arriving at a village, where the necessity of refreshment obliged us to stop, I observed the livery of M. d'Erlet, and darting out of the carriage, entered an inn where I thought I should find the object of my adoration. I ran up the first stair case I came to—

F 5

opened

opened a door—crossed two rooms with hasty steps—came to a third, which I found locked—and endeavouring to open the door made a noise. Who is there? cried a voice that penetrated my very soul. Have I then found you again! exclaimed I, trembling from head to foot—O happy Floricourt! Somebody now ran to the door, opened it with precipitation, and I fell into Julia's arms. What a moment! yet embittered with fear, perturbation, and anguish!

Ah! Floricourt! said she at last, do not aggravate my sufferings! I expect my father every minute! his obstinacy and cruelty are the least difficulties I have to contend with; he intends to marry me to a man I
hate

hate—studies to make me miserable—and embitters the life he gave. My soul is united to yours by an indissoluble bond—a bond that shall never be broken by me. While I have life I will be your's! Live for my sake! My father may prevent our union, but the love we bear each other is beyond his reach! Rely on my constancy;—neither time nor absence shall efface it!—love me always—and be gone—let me hear from you—we shall live in the same town. But I detain you at my peril:—we may be surprized every instant—be gone! be gone! Hearing M. d'Erlet's voice at this moment, I pressed Julia's hand to my lips with an ardor easily to be conceived—took one of her bracelets, which contained her picture,
from

108 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

from her arm, and escaped without notice.

I now returned to my uncle and Vilson, informed them of this interview, and they participated my joy.

BOOK

BOOK THE SECOND.

HOW easily are the hopes of a lover renewed!—how nearly allied are excessive despair and unbounded confidence in the object we love! The strong assurances Julia had just given me of her constancy dissipated a part of my uneasiness, and the conduct of my uncle and Vilson almost banished the rest. They soothed me into composure, strengthened my hopes, and promised me to form new schemes to subdue the cruelty of M. d'Erlet.

Elated with these hopes, I arrived
at ——— But how different were
my

110 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

my feelings from those with which I left it!—I now scarce attended to the common rules of politeness; and the visits I was under the necessity of receiving and paying were my torment. I bitterly regretted the freedom and solitude I enjoyed in the country, and when this irksome etiquette was ended, shut myself up in my apartment, thought of nothing but Julia, and devised the most probable methods of seeing her again.—I knew it was impossible to visit her, and yet ardently wished to see her, in order to communicate my sentiments, acquaint her with the torments I endured, and with the transient gleams of hope which sometimes cheered me.

Involved in these perplexities, I flew to the house of Vilson, and tore him from

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. III

from that solitude, those studies, and those labors, whose cause I was still unacquainted with. I poured out my soul in his bosom, informed him of the pangs I suffered, and implored his consolation and assistance. He heard me with the inexhaustible patience peculiar to himself, and was not in the least disgusted by my tiresome repetition of the same thing: he knew the necessity of communication in my state, pitied my situation, commiserated my sufferings, and joined his tears with mine. His calm and tranquil mind examined all my schemes, weighed them in the scale of reason, rectified their errors, formed new ones, and conceived the happy idea of conveying my letters to Julia, and of receiving her answers in return.

As

112 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

As Julia was adored in her father's house, and all the domestics saw her tears with regret, (being made acquainted with my passion and the overtures of M. de Merville by the fury and indiscretion of M. d'Erlet) they silently execrated his barbarity, compassionated the sufferings of his daughter, and were secretly devoted to me.

I soon therefore received from Julia answers to my letters, which at once constituted my consolation and despair; the assurances of her love transporting me with pleasure, and the cruelty of her father plunging me again into hopeless despondency. An old female servant, who had been present at Julia's birth, judging, in conformity to the interested views of the world, that my alliance would do honour to her

her young mistress, hastened to inform me (in whose favor she was strongly interested) of all that had passed. The merciless d'Erlet was of a different opinion, who thought himself in the zenith of his glory when he had it in his power to reject and mortify the Floricourts, who had dared to think him honoured by their alliance; his obduracy and unbounded cruelty embracing this happy opportunity of avenging his humbled pride.

The cruel state of uncertainty in which I now lived becoming at length insupportable to me, my uncle yielded to my repeated solicitations of again visiting M. d'Erlet, and renewing his proposals in my favor; which he accompanied with the most splendid offers

114 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

offers of profit and advantage. But this relentless tyrant, dead to every feeling except that of mortifying the President Merville, and rejecting his proffered kindness, answered coldly, that he did not chuse to marry his daughter; that M. de Floricourt, as heir to the President's fortune, might do much better; and that he had particular views with regard to his daughter that nothing on earth should ever induce him to change.

Neither the humiliation, tears, or entreaties which M. de Merville afterwards made use of, could make the least impression on this heart of adamant; and he returned to me more hurt and wounded by his ill success on my account, than exasperated on his own. He would not however de-
prive

prive me of all hopes at once, and therefore prevailed on some distinguished characters of weight and influence to speak to M. d'Erlet on the subject: but they obtained no other answer from this inflexible man than this, that if M. de Floricourt could place a diadem on the head of his daughter, she should not be his wife. This declaration was accompanied with so much fury and resentment, that those who had interested themselves in my favour, shocked at his brutality, soon desisted from their fruitless solicitations, lest they should expose themselves to further insults.

These repeated attempts to soften the heart of the cruel d'Erlet redoubled his ill humour, which he barbarously vented on his unhappy daughter.

daughter. After having discarded all those who came to solicit him in my favor, he ran up to Julia in the utmost wrath, and finding her in tears, exclaimed, unworthy of my affection! unworthy of being my daughter! thou weepest because thou art denied an husband who is the object of my hatred!—he adores you!—my resistance plunges him into despair!—I plant a dagger in his heart, and am revenged!—you are at liberty to renew your sobs and tears—but my presence becomes irksome to you—you wish for my death that you may indulge your foolish passion—you wish to be rid of a troublesome father, who lives too long, and for whose dissolution you hourly pray!

Oh! my

Oh! my father! cried Julia, shedding a flood of tears. Cease that name! interrupted the furious d'Erlet, for you profane the title! Can you then, Sir, (sobbed the disconsolate Julia) can you really afflict me to this degree? Renounce your lover, then! returned the barbarian,—renounce your Floricourt!—and you shall be restored to my favor. Ah! Sir! heaven knows (said Julia) how much I prize your affection! but your resentment blinds you—What has Floricourt done, or what your unhappy daughter, that you should persevere in punishing the innocent? These remonstrances exasperated him still more, and he vented his rage in reproaches against his daughter, and in execrations against me; declaring she deserved punishment, and that he would punish her for ever!

You

You wish for an husband, added he; your desires shall be gratified,—but not by him you have so basely chosen. You shall marry—you shall marry M. de ———. Oh heavens! exclaimed Julia, do not, Sir! oh! do not thus cruelly afflict me!—do not terrify and distress me!—I will marry nobody! Nobody but Floricourt you mean, interrupted the tyrant. But do you not know your father? you wish to soften me, as I would have done your mother, when by the most abject submissions I sought to gain her love. Did I prevail with her?—and can you hope to prevail with me? I treat you as I have been treated—and follow the example of your mother.

Saying these words he quitted her, totally unconcerned about the dreadful
state

state in which he had left her; and whether he meant to marry her or not he made preparations for it. He now went in search of M. de ———, a man of considerable property, whose avarice was equal to his wealth, his only pleasure consisting in the accumulation of money. This man readily closed with M. d'Erlet's scheme of marrying his daughter, as her fortune interested his passion for gold,—the only passion he knew. Such was the husband intended for Julia, and such was the man presented to her. She received him with horror! treated him with contempt, and consequently increased her father's rage against her.

I heard of these transactions with horror! and despair giving me strength, I vowed revenge! O Vilson! cried I,
 this

this is too much!—all hope is lost to me!—I have only one alternative left, either to lose Julia for ever, and die of despair, or carry her off from her unnatural father! What madness inflames you? cried Vilson, terrified at my vehemence; have you considered the fatal consequence of so wild an enterprize? I have considered all! returned I—all is horrible!—but the loss of Julia is still worse!

Blind and senseless as you are, said Vilson, stopping me, for I was going, would you plunge a dagger in your uncle's breast, embitter the remnant of his days, and make him miserable who has done so much to serve you? Oh! my friend! exclaimed I, fixed in astonishment, (a croud of ideas now rushing into my mind) say no more,
for

for you have pierced my very soul!—that poor old man!—what do I not owe him? Oh my uncle!—my dear uncle!—I will not prove myself unworthy of you!—You shall not have reason to upbraid yourself with having educated a monster of ingratitude! for such I should be were I to make you miserable!—But then my dearest Julia!—what am I without her? and what comfort can I afford my uncle?—despair will overwhelm me, and poison all my days—my fatal passion will prove my misfortune—and my misfortune will constitute his!

While I was in this state of tumult, distress, and inquietude, Julia's old chambermaid entered. Ah, Sir! said she, bursting into tears, Julia is lost to you for ever! What is it you

say? interrupted I with vehemence; the barbarian her father cannot surely have forced her into a marriage with the monster de ———? If he has, let him tremble at the fury of a desperate man!—a man who no longer values his life, and who looks on the grave as his asylum! Saying these words I sunk into a state bordering on annihilation, while the old woman, collecting all her powers, proceeded thus:—Julia is not married, nor likely to be so; but she is nevertheless lost to you:—your correspondence is discovered, and M. d'Erlet, who has just taken a letter from me by surprise, has assembled all his family, loaded me with reproaches, and discarded me from his service: he has ordered Julia to attend him, and has addressed her thus; you are then resolved to indulge
your

your passion, disobey my commands, and marry Floricourt? all my servants are corrupted, and I have not a faithful domestic left. But I will revenge this insult, and your tears shall not avail you! I will be obeyed! Marry the man I have chosen!

Julia now threw herself at her father's feet, embraced his knees, and wept bitterly; imploring him to revoke his cruel purpose, or at least defer it. Do you then think to deceive me, answered he?—to excite my compassion, and gain time, in order to prosecute your foolish passion and confirm your disobedience? But know, I am inaccessible to pity, and cease to deceive yourself!—you shall never marry the object of my hatred!—even my death shall not remove the impediments that

G 2

I will

124 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

I will raise between you!—my resolution is taken—either marry M. de ——— this very hour, or a convent shall be your fate! This is your only alternative, and I leave you to make the election.

Ah, Sir! said Julia, in an agony of sighs and tears. You make your choice! replied her father; but do not think of delay, for you shall quit me in a few hours!—you shall enter into a convent, and I will myself see you take the veil! You shall be shut up in a cloister, shall be separated from your Floricourt, and I go to prepare for your reception! Saying these words, he left his disconsolate daughter in a state of despair, and immediately went to the convent of the Dames de Sainte ———

My

My situation at this recital is scarce to be imagined, much less described. I remained for some time in a state of total insensibility, with my eyes fixed on the ground, while Vilson looked at me with commiseration. And shall I tamely suffer this! exclaimed I at last, starting from my chair; (my rage and transport now becoming equal to my former stupefaction) shall Julia be shut up in a convent!—shall she be separated from me by eternal grates!—shall I lose the object I adore! Inhuman fathers! by what right—by what privilege do ye thus cruelly dispose of your children? But this detested scheme shall never take place!—Barbarous d'Erlet it cannot!—Julia is mine by the most solemn vows!—she is mine by the strongest ties of affection!—

and I will never suffer—I will never bear this cruel sacrifice!

I now rushed out of the house with a fury in my looks and motions that astonished all beholders, while Vilson all the while followed and endeavoured to stop me. I walked with hasty strides to the convent already mentioned, and seeing M. d'Erlet just quitting it, I ran towards him, but looking at me with a smile of derision, he passed on with great composure, and left me in a state little short of madness.

Vilson now dragged me into his house, which constituted a part of the convent, (though it seemed, by the interposition of the church, another building) and exerted all his faculties
to

to dissipate my affliction: he soothed me by his compassion, cheered me with false hopes, and animated me by vain expectations. But these efforts would perhaps have proved fruitless had not a letter from Julia been at this moment put into my hands. After having acquainted me in it of her father's cruel determination, she assured me of her unalterable love, repeated her vows of constancy, and solemnly protesting to me that she would be only mine.

Convents are not impenetrable, said I mentally, after having read the letter. I may surely be permitted to see Julia.—Those who inhabit these cloisters cannot be void of humanity! they will feel for my situation—and I shall soften their hearts! These pleasing

reflections served in some measure to calm and compose my mind, while the flatterer Hope, that mental aliment of the unfortunate, almost subdued my affliction.

Julia was however soon after conducted to the convent of the Dames de Sainte ———, and introduced as one who was never to quit it more. The advantages promised to this house by M. d'Erlet were so considerable, and the portion he gave with his daughter so extraordinary, being treble the sum usually paid on these occasions, that they dazzled the Superior; while the presents he lavished on the nuns conciliated their affections, and rendered them the instruments of his power. Julia was admitted among the candidates; but M. d'Erlet shortened this
time

time of probation by his gold; subjected the whole community to his schemes; convinced them of the necessity of keeping his daughter from all communication with strangers; and as interest makes every Nun an inflexible Argus, Julia was well watched.

Avarice, that mean and sordid passion, reigns in these solemn retreats, as it too often does in the world; and I found, to my inexpressible anguish, that to this powerful principle, gold, so profusely scattered by M. d'Erlet, all the community were subservient. In vain did I make use of every possible method to see or write to Julia, in vain did I promise rewards, in vain endeavour to move them by compassion, for all hearts were shut to me; my only pleasure now consisting

130 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

in watching the opportunity of seeing Julia through the grate of the choir, though an hateful curtain, always drawn on these occasions, almost obstructed my view: Julia plainly discovering me from within, while I scarcely discerned her from without.

Two months elapsed in this state of cruel solicitude, and the moment approached when Julia was to take the white vail, and enter into her Noviciate, every dreadful preparative announcing the fatal ceremony.

I now became outrageous. I flew to the house of M. d'Erlet, and apprehending no impediment to seeing him, entered, but was soon stopped by a domestic, who on my asking to see his master told me he was engaged.

Regardless

Regardless of what he said, and lost to all fear, I rushed towards his apartment, crossed his anti-chamber and two other rooms, and entered into his closet with a menacing and furious air. He at first seemed terrified at my appearance; but soon recovering himself, what do you do here, Sir, said he?— is it by this intrusion and deportment that you mean to recommend yourself to me as a son in law?

These words recalled my scattered senses, and I addressed him thus: O! M. d'Erlet! take pity, not on me, but on your unfortunate daughter! Do not! O do not compel her to the barbarous sacrifice prepared for her! I stand in need of no advice, answered he coldly; my daughter appertains to me; I know what I ought to do,
and

despise your council.—Be gone! and let me see you no more! O heavens! cried I distractedly,—O monster!—unfeeling wretch!—and casting my eyes on a sword which stood in a corner, I rushed towards it in a state of desperation, and seizing it with fury, drew it out of the scabbard.

What is it you mean to do, wretch that thou art! cried M. d'Erlet, terrified at my action and furious aspect. To encounter death! replied I, or recover Julia.—O! M. d'Erlet! grant her to my unbounded love! at least do not confine her to a cloister!—set her at liberty—and I will from this moment give up all claims to her! But let her not be forced! take this sword, which I seized in a moment of distraction—I yield it to the father
of

of Julia—plunge it into my heart—avenge yourself, and punish me—but spare your innocent daughter!

To this speech he made no answer; returned the sword into the place from which I had taken it; resumed his courage; and said, with a rough unfeeling tone of voice, cease these vain and fruitless efforts! I will attend to nothing!—Julia's fate is already decided!—learn by my example, if ever you should become a father, to punish the obstinacy of your children. Barbarous man! cried I, can nothing soften you!—then plunge your sword into my breast, and at least relieve me by death! O M. d'Erlet! can you be devoid of pity!—give me Julia, or give me death! The barbarian now looking at me with a malignant smile, expressed

expressed himself thus; I triumph in humbling the pride of the Floricourts and the Mervilles, whom I now see crouching at my feet!—Rise! added he; you supplicate in vain! all your concessions are to no purpose—they have not the least effect upon me, and I despise rather than pity you!

No words can describe my sensations at this instant. A thousand conflicting passions struggling in my breast, kept me mute and motionless, while M. d'Erlet taking advantage of my imbecility, made his escape. Coming to myself by degrees, I rose with indignation, blushed at having humbled myself before this despicable man, and hating myself for my meanness, fled from this detested house. I now ran to my apartment (where I shut myself up)

up) with down cast eyes, lest those whom I met should discover my humiliation, and despise me for it.

To this state of indignation and shame succeeded another, where Love presided. This master passion banished all ideas which were not subservient to it's power, and I now saw only Julia——Julia! and the fatal obstacle which was about to separate me from her! I exerted all my faculties for some expedient to counteract the fatal purpose of M. d'Erlet; and as my uncle was my only resource, I flew to him, I embraced his knees, confessed what I had done, and conjured him to assist me. O Sir! said I, tomorrow is the fatal day!—fly to the bishop—use your utmost influence—prevail on him to oppose this dreadful ceremony—

ceremony—a ceremony as cruel as unjust!—a ceremony which humanity disavows, reason reprobates, and religion shudders at!

M. de Merville embraced me, complied with my request, and used his utmost influence with the Bishop: but as this prelate was a weak man, M. d'Erlet had already prevented the efficacy of every remonstrance, by persuading him that the interest of religion was concerned in hastening this fatal ceremony. What was I now to do, and what indeed could I do?—I rose at break of day, ran to the church of the Dames de Saint ——— with enthusiastic rage, and entered among the first of those who came in crowds to see this awful ceremony. Julia was dressed with the utmost pomp,

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 137

pomp, as is usual on these occasions; and a curious multitude and iron grate separated me from her.

As the Bishop was indisposed, the Grand Vicar (who supplied his place) soon arrived, and the sacrifice immediately began. As my loud exclamations interrupted the ceremony, I was commanded to be silent; but the agitations of my mind surmounting all opposition, I exclaimed louder than ever, Heaven, cried I, cannot approve of vows thus cruelly extorted!—vows already pledged to me! I protest against such violence! I protest against such cruelty!

Julia seemed to answer the Grand Vicar with great firmness; but the noise made in the church prevented my

my hearing what she said. Some inhuman wretches now laid hold upon me, compelled me to quit the place, and conducted me home; where Vilson joined me in about an hour, and told me all was over. He had remained in the church till the ceremony was finished; had seen the fatal scissars applied to the hair of Julia; had seen her bow her head to their malignant power; and had seen the veil thrown over her; tho' he had been at too great a distance to hear what was said in the first part of this ceremony, the latter being enveloped in the most profound silence.

As I knew it was customary for the new Nuns to come to the grate the day after the ceremony, and to salute all those who presented themselves,

selfes, I had prepared a letter; but Vilson, who was doubtful of my address on the occasion, insisted on taking charge of it himself. The event justified this precaution, as on his delivery of it Julia melted into tears, discovered by her countenance the agitations of her mind, and knowing him to be my friend, entreated him by her looks to make known her feelings to me.

I exhorted her in my letter to fly from this fatal place, to give herself up to me, and to rely on my faithful affection. I assured her it was the only method to escape from a state which Love condemned, and heaven itself could not approve. I told her I should be in a private street, under the windows of the convent, at midnight;

night; that I should return thither every night; and conjured her to throw me out her answer. I entreated her to investigate every part of the convent, and search every corner to facilitate our meeting. I assured her I could not live without her, and observed there was still a year of probation that we ought to make a proper use of. I repeated my oaths of constancy, told her a thousand times that I loved her, and tho' my letter contained a volume I thought it still too short.

I failed not to attend the succeeding night at the place mentioned in my letter, tho' without success, nobody appearing at the windows. I repeated my nocturnal visits six successive times to no better purpose, and these repeated

peated disappointments threw me into a state of despair; but on the seventh night I received a billet which only contained these words:

“ I am strictly watched; they never quit me; 'tis with the utmost difficulty that I have found an opportunity of writing you these few lines. I know not whether I shall ever be able to throw you out this billet, or whether you will ever receive it. You may perhaps grow tired of this fruitless attempt. I adore you. Endeavour to prevent my taking the vows. I cannot assist you, every resource being lost to me.”

These lines invigorated my soul. Julia then still loves me! cried I; she acquaints me with her situation, imploring

implores my assistance, and depends on my setting her at liberty! I will exert myself to the utmost: I will fly to Vilson! This faithful friend, who had neglected his studies and quitted his solitude to favor me, joined in contriving methods to facilitate my scheme of getting acquainted in the convent. While we were forming a thousand vain and fruitless projects, the idea of Valain, the young peasant who was son to Julia's nurse, struck my imagination. I flew to his house, which was only a small habitation near the outside of the garden: You are unhappy, Sir! said he, throwing himself at my feet on my entrance, and Julia is unhappy likewise! our kind benefactor and benefactress are both made miserable! This good young man was informed of my situation, knew my
distress,

distress, and commiserated my sufferings, while the whole town rung with my misfortunes.

Valain, said I, my torments are inexpressible! I love Julia to distraction, and am equally beloved by her; cruel impediments oppose our union—these impediments will soon become insurmountable—I have no dependance but on you—all other hopes are dead to me—assist me then I conjure you—you know all the secret avenues of this convent—contrive, invent some method for my secret entrance into it! Ah! Sir, cried Valain, what can I do?—I never enter the garden till a certain hour, when all the nuns are withdrawn: I do my work without seeing any of them, and when it is finished I retire: the door then shuts
upon

upon me, and never opens again 'till the accustomed hour.

Valain ! (exclaimed I distressed at this unfavorable account) do not abandon me ! I shall not prove ungrateful ! you have no risk to run ! Do you then think, Sir, replied this noble minded peasant, that I hesitate through fear ; and that I am terrified by danger ? No ! you have sustained my life—you have prolonged that of my parents—and I owe you all ! Would to God I could serve you ! If indeed Julia could be informed that she might find your letters under certain flower pots, and place her's there in return, I might with pleasure convey them to you ; but the difficulty lies in acquainting her with this scheme.

This

This opening threw me into a state of meditation. I made Valain give me a description of the flower pots he meant, and of the flowers each pot contained; I then put some money into his hand, intreated him to be always serviceable to me, promised to return soon, and withdrew.

I now flew to the house of Vilson; and not finding him in his apartment, waited for him a great while. He came to me at last, in a violent heat, like one who had been sitting near a great fire; but as it happened to be summer, and my mind was otherwise engaged, I took no notice of his appearance, and only informed him of what had passed between Valain and me. He greatly approved the happy expedient we had hit on for facilitat-

ing the correspondence between me and Julia, and promised to inform her of it. I made no inquiries how he meant to proceed, and embracing him for his friendship, writ the letter he was to convey. In this letter I gave Julia a particular description of the flower-pots under which she would find my letters, and under which she might place her own, and then returned to Valain, whom I informed of all particulars.

Vilson disguised himself in the habit of an ecclesiastic, covered his light hair with a brown wig, painted his eye brows of the colour, and made use of every precaution to be unknown. In this disguise he went to the parlour of Madame la Superieure, and presenting her with a purse of gold, intreated

intreated her to accept it as the restitution of an unhappy wretch who had just expired in his arms. The abbess looked at the gold with avidity, counted it with circumspection, thanked heaven for its receipt, and asked Vilson who the person was who had sent it: but he being on his guard, answered her that he acted under the seal of the most profound secrecy, and added that the same unhappy man having once treated Julia with indignity, had enjoined him to ask her pardon in person, and receive her answer by word of mouth.

The air of simplicity, candour, and piety assumed by the pretended Abbé, together with his religious discourse, produced the desired effect, and the Superieure still viewing the gold, or-

dered Julia to attend. Vilson casting down his eyes at her entrance, addressed her in an humble tone of voice, and said, I come to fulfil the duties of my function: sister, added he, remember the God to whom you have devoted yourself, and pardon all your enemies. I know my duty, answered Julia; and though I may have enemies, am a friend to all mankind. Vilson then desired that the young Novice might, with the Supérieure's consent, attend him to the other end of the parlour; which being done,—I am Vilson, cried he,—have a letter from Floricourt, and have formed this stratagem for its delivery:—the unhappy man whom I represent (added he, feigning an exaltation of voice) implores your pity, and has a right to expect it:—what are your sentiments,

sentiments, my sister? Julia replied they were such as he desired; and that his soul might rest in peace if that peace depended on her pardon. She now touched his hand in token of peace; and my letter, folded into the smallest compass, was slipped into her hand without observation. My friend Vilson now rejoined the Superieure, who again held some pious conversation with him on forgiveness of injuries, and at his departure recommended herself to his prayers.

Vilson returned to me immediately, and related every circumstance of what had passed, though he thought it improper previously to acquaint me how he meant to act. Vilson!—cruel Vilson! exclaimed I, after he had done speaking,—why not suggest this happy

idea to me!—I might have gone myself—I might have seen Julia—might have spoken to her—and heard her enchanting voice! Wretch that I am, for having missed so felicitous a moment! My friend Vilson could with difficulty restrain my transports, and convince me that my emotion and inquietude would have certainly betrayed me, and disappointed all my schemes. I was now continually at his house, because of its vicinity to the convent which contained Julia, the church alone separating our habitations. What would I not have given that this church had been only a partition wall; I might then have broken through it—might have reached the apartment of Julia, and might have carried her off!

Valain

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 157

Valain soon brought a letter from Julia in answer to mine. In this letter she pictured her distress in such lively colours that I trembled with agitation, and almost sunk into despair. I wrote to her daily, and daily received her answers.

Time nevertheless escaped with rapidity, and the gold so profusely dispersed by M. d'Erlet hastened the profession of his daughter. The day was fixed for her taking the vows, and my fears almost arose to distraction. Villon was terrified at my condition, and Valain wept with me, joined in my lamentations, commiserated my sufferings, and deplored the fate of his excellent benefactress.

In the midst of these transactions the Superior of the Convent was taken dangerously ill: of this I was soon informed, but could not offer up my prayers for her recovery, as her return of health could not but prove the completion of my misery. My inquietude was however such, that I made daily enquiries after her health and the opinions of the physicians with regard to it; while cruel wishes escaped me (in spite of my better reason) that she might never recover. I was now continually at Vilson's house or at that of the gardener, and always went disguised to the latter for fear of bringing him into trouble.

One day while I was with Valain I heard the funeral bell, which announced

nounced the death of the Superior. I started at the sound; my hopes expired, misfortune threatened me with the full extent of her power, and I was within a few days of the fatal moment that was to rob me of all my soul held dear.

A lay sister now came to the garden door, called Valain, and I hid myself. Valain, said she, (giving him a key on his approach) take a man with you, and come and open the tomb in the choir. As I distinctly heard what she said, I approached the gardener, who was collecting the necessary implements. Valain!—my dear Valain! cried I, I must accompany you; lend me some of your cloaths, and let me pass for one of your companions: I shall then enter these cruel

H 5

walls,

walls, which confine the woman I adore, and perhaps see her.

I now tore off my cloaths, and seized some of Valain's, dressed myself in them with the utmost expedition, and being thoroughly disguised, followed him with a palpitating heart. We passed the fatal door, traversed the garden, entered the Convent, and came to the choir, my heart beating with increased velocity. We labored to raise the stone which covered the vault, drew it up, and remained alone for some time, the Nuns not choosing to appear till the infectious air long confined in these vaults had been thoroughly purged by ventilation, for which purpose they had now opened every passage.

A thou-

A thousand confused ideas now rushing into my mind, I took pen, ink, and paper out of my pocket, and wrote to Julia. As I knew the Novices generally watched the dead, I conjured her not to be alarmed, desired her to ask leave to watch alone, and assured her I would be her companion. Two hours elapsed, and I was now to descend into the vaults with Valain, in order to arrange the chests; the curiosity of the Nuns to see these receptacles of the dead, drew them thither in crouds, and their fear and timidity induced them to make choice of the time when we were present. I was the first who descended into these funeral habitations:——happy, thrice happy, had death conducted me to these gloomy regions!

I perceived

I perceived Julia beneath these solemn vaults, and approached her with an universal tremor. I had only a few words to say to her. She shuddered at my presence: but the fear of causing our own destruction, and the joy of seeing each other again, stifled the violent efforts of this first interview; our strength was instantly renewed, and our transports were again shut up in our bosoms. I now gave her my letter, saying in the softest tone of voice I could assume, do as I desire—fear nothing—I must either converse with you or die—and this vault, where I shall wait for the return of night, shall prove my tomb. I had time to say no more: the Nuns rejoined us, and surrounded Valain and me, their numbers proving inadequate to their fears; and we now
conducted

conducted them wherever their curiosity led them. These vaults were very numerous, and of an immense extent; they formed a suit of subterraneous apartments, which communicated with each other, and terminated far beyond the church.

The Nuns at length withdrew, desiring us to attend them; and we saw them hasten up a narrow staircase, which only admitted one person at a time, each endeavouring to be foremost: Julia, who wished to be the last, readily gave up her claim; and as their impatience to be foremost superseded every attention to Julia, I had an opportunity of seizing her hand, of pressing it with mine, and of conjuring her to be punctual the following night.

Valain

Valain and I were now left by ourselves, and we traversed these asylums of the dead with torches in our hands. There are few Religious Houses whose sepulchres are so immense as those of the Dames de Sainte ———. This community is very antient; and it was formerly taken for granted that those who were interred amongst a community consecrated to God, were sure of entering into heaven. Many private individuals had had vases there, and many still preserved them.

We investigated every part of these gloomy mansions, and I at last discovered a door in one of the vaults, and asked Valain what it was for? He replied it belonged to a prison where the delinquents of the community

nity

nity were formerly confined as a punishment for their offences, but that it had not been made use of a great while, and that he had himself a key of it, which had by chance fallen into his hands. We opened the door, and found this prison led to a wood house which communicated with the interior part of the convent; but of this place no further use was made, the timorous Nuns having long forsaken it on account of its vicinity to the tombs. We tried the same key, entered still further into this place, and found ourselves in the convent, from which the fear of being surprized soon made us retire. We shut the door again; I took possession of the key, and being agitated by a thousand confused ideas, put it in my pocket

pocket without knowing what use I intended to make of it.

We returned the same way we went, and finished our work. I now told Valain he might retire. Leave me, Valain, said I; I chuse to be alone. I will wait among these tombs for the return of night.—I shall see Julia, and I shall speak to her. Valain, terrified at what I said, desired to watch with me; but I at last convinced him how necessary it was for him to retire, least his absence from home should render him suspected. I added, that he ought to be cautious how he withdrew, for fear I should be missed by his returning alone. He followed my advice, made use of the garden key in his possession, escaped without being observed, and left me
among

among the tombs, ruminating on Julia.

I walked with slow and cautious steps over chests and bones, either separate or collected into heaps, hid my torch in one of the most distant vaults, so that its light might be in some measure obscured, and then exercised my reflections in these immense subterraneous caverns. I passed thro' several tombs, and found myself in darkness. I then entered another placed at the end opposite to that of the Nuns, and perceived a light: I at first thought it proceeded from my flambeau, and that I was returning to the place where I had left it; but going on I discovered a fire through stones ill put together. I now stopped, in a kind of tremor; but soon recovering myself,

myself, there must be some living inhabitant in these regions, said I mentally, who may have been drawn hither by motives resembling mine, tho' he could not enter the same way: there must then be some other way of entering and quitting this place, and Julia may make use of it, as the key of the prison and woodhouse is in my possession.

I now returned thanks to Heaven for this happy discovery, and hastened towards the light; and perceived, thro' the chinks which the ill secured stones had left, a great fire, heard the blowing of bellows, and the crackling of coals. Taking out the key which I had in my pocket, I struck it against one of the stones, and tried to move it out of its place. Who is there?
cried

cried somebody on the other side, while the noise of the bellows immediately ceased. I worked on with redoubled vigor, and found I was assisted on the other side: the stone giving way, at last fell down, and I saw a deep vault, even with that in which I stood. I could now plainly discover furnaces, bellows, and crucibles, while a man appeared at the opening. Who's there? cried a firm and resolute voice: this voice I instantly recollected, and knew it to be Vilson's; mine struck him equally, tho' my cloaths disguised me; and seizing a light, he gazed at me some time with astonishment.

Do you not know me then, Vilson? exclaimed I.—Do you not know Floricourt, your friend? Yes! answered he,

he, embracing me, and find you are thus by chance made acquainted with my secret: you have often wondered at my sequestration; but it is in this profound solitude I spend my days and nights, engrossed by the powerful art which may make my fortune augment your's, and prolong the date of our existence. Do you then really, Vilson, interrupted I, yield to these foolish fancies and strange chimeras? Yes! replied he, these foolish fancies and strange chimeras, despised because not understood, are founded in truth and verity;—a verity of which I have been long convinced, and therefore devote myself to those sublime researches in this secret place which will one day strike you with astonishment! This vault is placed beneath two others, and chance made me acquainted with
with

with it by my lifting up a stone. Neither the Nuns to whom this house belongs, nor the tenants who preceded me, ever discovered this opening. But what are you in search of, added he?—whence came you? and how come you here?

The situation I was in, the joy I felt at meeting with him in these gloomy regions, and the discovery I had made, threw me into a state of mind not to be described: a thousand ideas succeeded each other with the utmost rapidity, and my confusion was such that I entered into no investigation of the madness with which Vilson was possessed. I however recollected myself sufficiently to relate all that had happened, and how I had acted. My dear friend! added I, it is to this
happy

happy opening that I shall be indebted for the delivery of Julia from cruelty and oppression! O Vilson! I shall set her I love at liberty! and shall depend on your assistance! He promised to do all in his power to assist me. I embraced him with the ardour of friendship and the effusions of gratitude, and returned towards my tomb, reanimated by hope.

I went back the same way I came, looked up, and found it dark. I could now discern no other light than that which proceeded from the flambeau of the Nuns, who were conducting the corps which was to be interred the next day to the choir. I heard their singing, ardently wished for their retiring, and trembled lest Julia, terrified at being left alone, should shudder

at

at the awful spectacle. Love however gave her courage, and the certainty of my being in the vaults strengthened her resolution. The Nuns, highly delighted with her desire of watching alone, applauded her resolution on so trying an occasion, and readily granted her request, as they wished to be excused from so irksome a task. They now hurried over the prayers usual on these occasions, and quitted the choir with precipitation, each fearing to be the last.

The moment they were retired, Julia came boldly to the edge of the tomb, and cried out they were all gone. This signal put an end to my impatience, and quieted my fears. O Julia! exclaimed I, immediately ascending into the choir, do I then see you
again

again! but O heavens! in what a place!—and at what an awful period! Is this the witness of the ardour of my love, and of the purity of your's! I now saw Julia shudder; I saw her ready to faint at what she had done. She fixed her eyes on me with terror, while I extended my arms to prevent her falling, and rejecting my assistance, looked at the corps of the Nun, drest in her usual habit, and placed in the middle of the choir, with horror; terrified at this witness of my transports. Her ingenious terror figured to itself the dead Nun as still sensible of her conduct, and it was with the utmost difficulty that I convinced her we were alone. We now gave ourselves up to those effusions of heart, and transports of affection, which are common with passionate lovers after so long
an

an absence, and such distresses as we had experienced.

You love me, Julia! cried I, and cannot therefore yield to the cruel injunction of your unnatural father without a crime! Our hearts are irrevocably united! My attachment to you is of the purest nature, and heaven has rewarded it by inspiring you with an equal passion! You are mine by the strongest ties of affection, and ought to be only mine! You are nevertheless on the point of taking vows of the most terrific nature!—vows that must separate us for ever! You must swear to renounce, shun, and forget me! Can you do so, Julia? The time approaches, nay it is hand, when you are to offer an unwilling sacrifice to God—a sacrifice that cannot be ac-

ceptable in his sight. If you really love me, follow me, cried I; I have discovered an opening among these tombs by which I can set you at liberty.

What a proposal is this? exclaimed Julia; shall I thus quit an asylum where I am to be separated from the world, exasperate my father still more against me, and incur his malediction? No! interrupted I with impatience, it is that of heaven you ought to dread! you cannot deserve your father's curse by following your husband, for such I really am; your father has terrified you, he has made you tremble at his displeasure, and your exalted virtue is the cause of all these terrors! Has your father ever discovered the feelings of a father?—he has given
you

EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS. 171

you life 'tis true, but has he a right to make that life miserable? Your rights are equally sacred: you owe him your respect, and he owes you his love, attention, care, and compassion. He has failed in his duty, and has therefore set you at liberty. The barbarian thought it not enough to oppose a union formed by nature, and authorized by God; he wished to bind you by an intolerable chain, in order to make you the victim of his unjust resentment and barbarous revenge, you have never experienced any thing from him but rigor, fury, and hatred. He rejects you—he throws you from his bosom—and he is no longer your father. His barbarity has broken the chain which should attach you to him—his laws are annihilated—and you are free. The prejudices of the world may still

grant him rights; rights of which he has proved himself unworthy, and which you ought to condemn. Heaven, more just, takes his authority from him, authorizes your independence, and commands you to love me.

You have convinced me! cried Julia. Your courage inflames me, and I am ready to follow you! I am sure I cannot live without you, and wish to live for your sake! that my father is cruel, all his actions prove; yet I feel it most on this occasion, without examining the cause. Perhaps my distresses have soured my disposition; perhaps—but I forget the whole world—I forget I have a father!—Alas! have I ever had a father?—by what authority would he constitute my misfortune by forcing the inclinations of my

my heart?—can his power extend so far as to make me miserable? No! my soul reassumes its liberty!—I renounce every thing!—Love inspires me!—I follow its dictates! Floricourt, what's to be done?

I now acquainted her with the project I had formed, and with the discovery I had made. She ventured to descend with me into these profound regions, and I conducted her, trembling, through these mansions of the dead, where she cast her eyes around with terror, and would have fainted but for my presence. It was in this dreadful situation, and amidst these tombs, that I repeated my vows of loving her for ever, and where she in return gave me the most solemn assurances of her constancy,—the dead

alone being witnesses of our protestations and of my happiness on the occasion. Julia being animated by hope, now walked with me with more composure. I shewed her the prison and woodhouse, the interior door of which she knew; I pointed out the way she was to take, and I conducted her to the opening by which we were to escape. Affectionate Lovers! cried Vilson, who was still in his laboratory, how have you contrived to find this facility of communication in such a place? But the active fires which inflame you, and which have hitherto only increased your woes, are on the point of producing the happiest effects, and I have the satisfaction of applauding the course you have taken.

We

We continued with Vilson some time, reasoning about the design we had formed, when reflection suggesting to me the danger of delay, I wanted to depart immediately. Why put off the execution of our design? exclaimed I: let us make use of the present moment: this horrid place is open to us—liberty extends her arms towards us—she accuses us of delay—why not embrace this happy opportunity—why wait for further impediments? Julia! Vilson! let us be gone!

My friend strenuously opposed my scheme, condemned my impatience, and at last convinced me that such a step would inevitably prove our ruin. He told me that while the vaults were open they would search every part of them, would discover our traces,

and pursue us; never mentioning the danger to which he should himself be exposed: yet this idea was the only consideration that restrained me. He now endeavoured to reanimate my courage with regard to my fears, and I was convinced by his reasonings. Fatal prudence!—how many times hast thou deprived us of supreme felicity!—how many times hast thou mislead us!

We now contented ourselves with regulating all that was necessary for facilitating our flight, and I took charge of the preparations. Julia was to burn all the letters she had received from me, to quit the Convent through the woodhouse, to lock the door after her, and bring away the key; while I undertook to meet her

as

as she came out, and to accompany her through this region of death: a post-chaise, by my order, was to wait for us at some distance: we were to go to some part of the sea coast, and procure some vessel to convey us to England; where we purposed to remain till the assiduities of Vilson had consoled my uncle, and appeased the wrath of M. d'Erlet.

A delightful future now opened to my view: my imagination was heated by approaching felicity, and I anticipated the joys to come. Julia! cried I, your father will be affected by our constancy! he will certainly be melted by our unbounded love, and by what we have suffered for each other!—he will accuse himself of cruelty, and at last consent to our felicity!—Thus

happy, free, and united, we shall return to receive his pardon and his blessing: these he cannot refuse us: we will force them from him by our attention and respect; compel him to regret his former conduct; and induce him to treat us with tenderness and regard, instead of cruelty and aversion.

Julia shed tears of joy at this ideal prospect of happiness; convinced that flight alone could withdraw her from her fatal Convent, and preserve her for me; as what had passed at her assuming the habit proved beyond contradiction that all would be over if she stayed till the taking of her vows; the Grand Vicar being in unison with M. d'Erlet, and being determined to finish the sacrifice, in spite

spite of the tears, entreaties, and resistance of the victim.

Midnight approached, and I was now to reconduct Julia to the choir, where the Nuns could not fail to attend at the appointed hour. We therefore finished our discourse by fixing the time of our departure: Saturday was almost concluded; Sunday approached, and the preparations (which I intended to expedite by money) requiring time, Wednesday or Thursday night was fixed on, and we quitted Vilson.

I ascended into the choir with Julia, and found we were scarce in time. I heard the descent of the Nuns, who only waited for each other, in

in order to enter in a body, and then replunged myself into the tombs.

I waited with impatience for the conclusion of the ceremony, that I might return to Julia, and remain with her till morning. How tedious were their prayers!—how tardy the minutes which kept me from her! I had been, so long deprived of her society, and so long distressed on her account, that I thought it scarce possible I should be near her. I had still many things to say to her—a thousand things to communicate—and a thousand to be assured of. An infinity of ideas now presented themselves to my imagination, which I wished to communicate, and which made me miserable because I feared they came too late. I trembled lest one of the Nuns should

should propose to watch with Julia; but in this I was mistaken; their fear and terror precluding all such ideas; they with difficulty sustained the awful spectacle of one of their dead sisters; admired the resolution of Julia, applauded her magnanimity, and retired without renewing their offers of watching with her..

I now darted again into the choir, enjoyed the sight of Julia, and heard her enchanting voice. Our souls were now intoxicated by an enthusiastic rapture; we repeated our vows of constancy a thousand times; talked to each other about our departure from the convent; and amused ourselves with what we should see in London, where we agreed to be immediately united by the most sacred bonds of marriage,

182 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

marriage, and to ratify our vows at the altar.

We feasted in idea on this prospect of felicity, and anticipated the time when we were to become the happiest of beings. Fear fled before us; all obstacles seemed removed; Hope advanced with smiling face; and we thought ourselves sure of being blessed.

The hours nevertheless rolled rapidly. Day break was at hand, and we were under the necessity of parting. My heart sunk at the idea; that of Julia seemed strongly affected; and dreadful presentiments made us tremble. Julia! exclaimed I, I must be gone!—but if you wish me to live, persist in your resolution! should any thing extraordinary occur, or even
should

should it not occur, write to me every day, and put your letters under the flower pots, where you will find mine. But alas! Julia! I want comfort! the nearer I approach the happy moment that is to unite us for ever, the more I dread ill fortune: Comfort me therefore, Julia!

Julia, almost as much affected as myself, at our separation, collected all her powers to support me: be comforted, my dear husband! said she; exert yourself to procure my liberty, and be assured your happiness will always constitute mine! The word husband, uttered by the mouth of Julia, and addressed to me, instantly banished all my apprehensions, and filled me with inexpressible delight! I threw myself into her arms, pressed her

her to my bosom, and could not tear myself away, though prudence urged me to be gone. I staid so long, that I at length perceived the approach of a Nun, whom I saw at a distance, when I immediately sunk again into the tomb, the distance between us being so great as to prevent her knowing who it was.

The Nun, who thought she had seen a ghost, screamed out, and fell into a swoon; while Julia, really terrified, discovered an equal degree of terror to the Nuns, who ran thither on hearing the cry, and who asked her the cause of it. The terrified Nun now coming to herself, declared she had seen the spirit of the defunct sink into the tomb. Julia who greatly feared the Nun's having discovered me,

me, eagerly embraced this opportunity of confirming her assertion; the rest of the sisterhood not daring to approach the tomb.

The moment I arrived in these subterraneous regions I went in search of my flambeau, which I found where I had left it. I then quitted the tombs through Vilson's opening, replaced the stone which had been removed, and returned home, where my impatience and solicitude would not suffer me to take any rest. I began the preparations for our departure immediately, and as I thought Vilson's being privy to my scheme might prove dangerous, by exposing him to the fatal consequences of our flight, I thought it my duty to conceal it from him: I therefore did all myself.

myself. I soon procured horses, and kept them in readiness; but found a proper conveyance by water much more difficult. Gold however, that irresistible metal, at length brought me acquainted with the captain of a merchantman on the eve of his departure for England. He promised to wait for me at some distance, but positively refused to send his boat to fetch me. I was now under the necessity of procuring one for my purpose; and therefore hired a boat after some difficulty, and fixed the night and hour when it was to attend at the appointed place.

These preparations required time: but as I in the interim received a letter from Julia, describing the terror occasioned in the convent by the pretended

pretended apparition, and the strict watch set over her, together with the urgency of her father (who had fixed the day) for the conclusion of the ceremony, I hastened my preparations. I now redoubled my zeal and activity; and on Wednesday morning all was ready; nothing remaining necessary for our security but quitting the convent unobserved; two hours being sufficient to conduct us to the sea side, and embark us in safety, as we should be at a great distance before we were missed.

I now acquainted Julia by letter that every thing was ready, and that we were on the point of taking our flight. I told her that the Nuns being obliged to rise at midnight, would retire early to rest, and that
 she

she must therefore quit them the moment they went to bed, and excuse herself from attending the choir under pretence of collecting and preparing herself for the awful ceremony of next day; an excuse which would be readily admitted. I charged her to burn all papers relative to our connection, and to come out immediately; adding that her associates, amazed at her not appearing the next day, would immediately enter her cell, and not finding any thing there to strengthen their suspicions, would seek for her throughout the Convent; which search, as it required time, would preclude all danger, as we should then be far beyond their reach.

I had carefully avoided seeing Vilson during these transactions; nor would I
visit

visit him the day when all my preparations were finished. I was now elated with the success of my negotiation, never once doubting of my happiness; and yet my solicitude and impatience increased every hour. M. d'Erlet, who had me narrowly watched, wondered at my apparent tranquillity, and was greatly disappointed at not finding me wretched; as he wished to see me plunged into all the horrors of despair.

The long wished for evening came at last; and I informed my uncle I was going to sup in town, and should not return 'till very late. This affectionate friend, apprized of the fatal stroke prepared for me the next day, and ignorant of my project, endeavoured to prevent my going; as he

he wished to be near me on so trying an occasion, and to pour the balm of consolation and comfort into my soul. His compassionate goodness, and affectionate regard, detained me with him in spite of my wishes to be gone, and compelled me to lose many precious moments.

I broke from him at last, though with regret, and disguising myself in my apartment, made my escape by a private door in the garden which led into a bye street, and ran towards the house of Vilson; but meeting the cruel d'Erlet just as I was about to enter, I sickened at his sight, and forgetting my disguise, feared he would discover me, and expose my friend. I therefore passed on, made a wide circuit in order to return to the same

same place, and seizing the moment when I thought he could observe me no longer, darted into the house.

I flew to the vault, leaving Vilson with his crucibles, and passed through the opening, from which he had taken care to remove the stone. I moved with the utmost rapidity; and forgetting the wax-light I had in my hand, it went out. My impatience not suffering me to light it again, I went on, knowing the way. I advanced towards the woodhouse, and found silence reigned around me. As I feared being too late, I rather flew than walked, anticipating the joy of meeting Julia for ever, and conducting her in safety, and void of fear, through these gloomy vaults. I touched the door, and found it open. Julia is
gone

gone then! cried I, and has forgot to shut the door after her.

I now returned to the path by which I came; and fearing Julia had mistaken her way, I ran through all the different vaults, calling on her name. My course was at length impeded by something which rolled under my feet: I tottered—and fell—and putting my hand to the ground in order to discover the cause of my falling, I found it wet, and took up a lamp. I now endeavoured to rise; and extending my arms, touched the apparel of a woman, and felt a bosom that scarce respired. Can it be you, Julia? exclaimed I, shuddering. O Heavens! I was answered by a sigh. I advanced towards the place where she lay, and took hold
of

of her. The dread of finding herself seized on in this place of horror, where darkness surrounded her, brought her to herself. Heaven shield and assist me! cried she.

It is me!—it is your lover!—it is Floricourt! exclaimed I in an agony. Cruel obstacles have detained me, wretch that I am! but re-assume your courage, Julia, added I; our troubles are almost at an end.

Is it then you? replied she, in a faint voice.—I can go no farther.—I am very weak.—Oh! Floricourt! all is vain! I have forgot my duty!—I have profaned these sacred walls! and an avenging God has punished my transgression! Bewildered in these dreadful vaults, urged by my bound-

less love, and yet feeling remorse at what I did, I fancied the dead who surrounded me rose up in judgment against me, and endeavoured to obstruct my passage. I shuddered with fear—dropped my lamp—and fell down. O! Floricourt! I have offended heaven! I cannot utter more!—I ought not!—Great God! terrible God! have pity on me!—my end approaches!

What became of me at this moment! I took her up in my arms, I watered her with my tears, I carried her towards the opening, and called Vilson. But these fatal caverns drowned my feeble voice. Julia was dying; and I seemed dying myself. I could scarce sustain her weight—I could go no farther—and remained immoveable, endeavouring to support her and re-animate

mate

mate myself. Adieu, Floricourt! said she; we are separated by death!—Death! who has waited for me amidst these tombs, whither I was drawn by love, and where I hoped to find felicity with the object most dear to me on earth. I shall remain among these sepulchres.—Heaven accept my repentance, and that life I wished to unite with my lover's.—How dear was that life to me!—The sacrifice is terrible! But I submit to your decrees.—My sufferings were not for your sake.—Floricourt was the only subject of my prayers, and I confined all my affections to him.—Your hand grows heavy on me—it strikes—pardon—

Julia had, alas! entered this fatal place with fear and trembling; and not finding me there to receive her,

had wandered about this gloomy concave, and entered into the vaults filled with coffins, which was not the way she should have taken. Amazed and terrified at her situation, her imagination became disordered; she thought she saw heaven open, armed with vengeance against her, and the surrounding dead rise in judgment to condemn her. Thus bewildered, terrified, and half distracted, she fell.

O grief! O anguish! O despair! my heart is broken at the bare remembrance! I felt her sigh, grow cold, and heavy in my arms. Sinking, and unable to sustain her weight, I laid her gently on the ground, and endeavoured to be convinced of her real condition; but to my unspeakable anguish found all my fears confirmed—

firmed—she breathed no more. Where am I?—what have I done?—exclaimed I in an agony, the excess of my misery now presenting itself to my imagination in all its horrors, a cold sweat bedewed me, and I fell senseless by her side.

How long I remained in this condition I know not. Vilson at length, astonished at our absence, terrified at our delay, and oppressed by dreadful forebodings, took a flambeau and came in search of us. What a spectacle now presented itself to his view!—Julia surrounded by coffins, lying dead in my arms, myself as pale as she. Terror for some time suspended all his faculties, and he remained immovable with astonishment and horror; but recollecting at last how much we stood in need of his assistance, he examined us both;
he

198 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

he found Julia was gone for ever, and that I still breathed. He flew to his laboratory, brought me a powerful cordial of his own composition, made me swallow it, and brought me to my senses.

Opening my eyes, I discovered Vilson in a distracted state, and Julia lying pale and lifeless by my side. Where am I? exclaimed I; then instantly recollecting all that had happened, O! Vilson! Vilson!—Julia! Julia! wretch! cried I, and again relapsed into my former state of insensibility. My friend now took me up in his arms, carried me out of this horrible place, passed through his laboratory, and brought me to his chamber, where he did his utmost to restore me to myself, and at
last

last succeeded. I now saw Julia no longer; I knew she was dead, and yet redemanded her of Vilson, wishing to return to her and die. I now darted from the bed on which my friend had laid me, and descended again into the vaults; but when I came to the opening through which I was to have conducted Julia in order to become the happiest of men, my strength forsook me, my misfortunes stared me in the face with all its horrors, and I remained immoveable. Vilson endeavoured to console me; but his endeavours were vain; I was determined to die with Julia, and join my ashes with hers, and therefore insisted on entering the tomb. My friend exerted himself to the utmost to prevent this mad enterprize: but finding all remonstrances in vain, he

took advantage of another fainting which soon seized me, and laying hold of me with vigorous arms, put me on his back and carried me to my uncle's house; he there threw me on the bed in my own apartment, pulled the string of my bell, and then escaped by a secret door, and returned to Julia. As he was convinced there remained no hopes of her, he felt in her pockets for the key of the woodhouse, and not finding it there, searched every corner without success. He then examined the woodhouse, in order to place Julia in the convent; but found it locked, the door of the prison which communicated with it only being left open; the lock of which being on the spring, he pulled the door after him with violence, and flew to place Julia at the foot of the stair case

case which led from the choir into the tomb of the nuns. He now returned to his laboratory, shut up the opening made there, cemented the stone, and blacked the place with smoke and mud, that the separation might not be discovered. He then removed all his instruments out of this vault into an upper one, and closed up the entrance of it in such a manner as to leave no room for suspicion that there was any entrance there.

These labours employed him all night, as he was convinced of how much consequence it was both to his security and mine to envelope every circumstance of this horrible event in the most profound secrecy. Affectionate friend! he was exerting all his faculties

202 EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS.

faculties to save me; while death was my only hope and the only object of my wishes!

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



